

**Jessie's Centre for Teenagers
Audited Financial Statements**

	Year Ended March 31 2004	Year Ended March 31 2003
Revenue		
Ministry of Community and Social Services	494,974	478,410
United Way of Greater Toronto	384,508	352,859
Grants & Donations	138,612	136,214
Health Canada	36,515	38,696
City of Toronto	19,000	19,000
Children's Aid Foundation	25,000	32,333
Other Income	22,302	9,664
Total Revenue	1,120,911	1,067,176
Expenses		
Salary and Benefits	868,566	761,664
Program Supplies	74,339	81,059
Jessie's Non Profit Homes	-	35,505
Building Occupancy	39,374	61,404
Client Transportation	32,358	28,508
Food	25,841	23,231
Office Expenses	28,932	23,399
Legal & Audit	7,897	7,071
Communications	10,880	10,324
Staff Training	11,645	10,276
GST	6,344	4,968
Advertising	3,938	4,040
Fundraising	7,196	1,384
Insurance	5,595	3,733
Total Expenses	\$ 1,122,905	1,056,566
Surplus before Amortization	(1,994)	10,610
Amortization	66,437	64,869

Without the following individuals some of our programs and services wouldn't be possible...

Claire Angus-Caplan	National Life
Hilary Arnold	Osler Hoskin Harcourt
Attoe Family Foundation	Paramount Canada's Wonderland
Ann Bodley	Prentice Yates and Clark
Bennett Family Foundation	Angela Ryan
Bloor Collegiate Institute Students	David Reed
BMO Fountain of Hope	Linda Rapson
June Callwood	Raptors Foundation
Canadian Independent Camera Association	Morton Ritts
Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton McIntyre & Cornish	Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation
Children's Aid Foundation	Conn Smythe Foundation
CHUM City Christmas Wish	Sanderling Foundation
Contextx	Yuri Smieska
Joanne Dereta	Thin Data
Gordon Hoops	Tides Foundation
J.P. Bickell Foundation	Toronto Foundation for Student Success
IBM Employees Charitable Trust	Tippet Foundation
George Lunan Foundation	Henry White Kinnear Foundation
F.K. Morrow Foundation	Women Together-Timothy Eaton
Four Seasons Hotels	Memorial Church
George Cedric Metcalfe Foundation	Residents of the Wellington
Harry Miller	Val Wheeler
Manifest Communications	
McLean Foundation	
Metropolitan Community Church	

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Layout and design: Rabia Hussain



Highlights of 2004

- **6,282** visits to the Centre by teenagers
- Our low birth weight rate among Prenatal Nutrition Program participants is **2.9%** which is half the national average
- **8** Scholarships awarded to young mothers attending college or university
- **70.2%** of mothers at Jessie's had earned high school credits since the birth of their baby

In a recent survey, mothers reported that coming to Jessie's has:

- Helped me to better understand my child's needs - **89.3%**
- Helped me meet people in the same situation that I can talk to - **91.5%**
- Helped me feel more confident about myself and about becoming a mother - **87.2%**
- Helped me learn about other services in the community - **90.2%**

Jessie's Annual Report 2004

www.jessiescentre.org

Housing Program Expands- New Housing Options for Young Families

Housing stability is a key first step in the success of young families. Jessie's Housing Program has developed strategies that have proven very successful at helping young families access and retain stable housing. Our Housing Program was funded originally by the United Way of Greater Toronto. This year we are proud to announce several exciting new initiatives made possible with the support of the City of Toronto's Supporting Community Partnership Initiatives.

We will be able to double our efforts assisting young parents with their housing searches. We offer very practical one-to-one support for young families to help them learn how to get the income they are entitled to, find appropriate apartments and negotiate with landlords. Our Housing Counsellors also help young parents understand their rights and responsibilities as tenants.

We have also established a new partnership with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) through Young Parents No Fixed Address (YPNFA), a coalition of agencies serving young parents in Toronto. Jessie's has established a referral agreement for ten units of subsidized housing with the TCHC. This will allow Jessie's to place young families in rent geared-to-income units within the TCHC community of St. James

Town. Utilizing the resources of the YPNFA coalition, Jessie's will coordinate support to the young families to ensure they maintain their tenancy as well as receive support in other areas of their lives, such as parenting, education, and health care.

Building on this model of independent housing with supports, Jessie's will continue to develop partnerships with co-operative housing providers in the City. At present, we have referral agreements with five co-ops, which allow us to place young families in subsidized units at these co-ops. A key component of our expanded housing program will be to continue our outreach to co-op housing providers across the City in order to develop additional partnerships.

Jessie's has also created a Pre-Natal Housing Start-Up Loan. This loan will support women with funds to get appropriate housing for their family before their babies are born and before they are eligible for family benefits from Social Assistance. Often, lack of stable or appropriate housing can put the family at risk for intervention from child protection agencies, potentially leading to at-birth apprehensions. This loan will allow women who meet the criteria to stabilize their housing prior to the birth, so that they can focus on preparing for the arrival of their new babies.

A Message From Our President

This has been another successful year in the life of Jessie's Centre. In keeping with our strategic planning decisions of last year, we focused on enhancing existing programs to ensure the continued high level of services provided by the Centre. The year has seen us complete needed renovations to the Centre, including the nursery. In addition, we not only maintained existing funding but we also obtained funding from new sources that will assist us in improving our services.

It has been an honour to serve as president of the Board in the final year of my three-year term. The Board has grown this year, encompassing a strong and diverse group of individuals, including Jessie's grads. Board members continue to be active on joint staff-board committees at Jessie's, and in overseeing the general development of the Centre. I would be remiss if I did not mention that our role as board members is made easy by Jessie's dedicated staff, including their executive director, Bev Leaver.

I look forward to seeing further developments at Jessie's in the coming years and to its continued success in delivering badly needed services to teenage parents and their families throughout the city of Toronto. Becoming a mother for the first time myself this year has given me a newfound appreciation of the need for the role that Jessie's plays in the lives of young parents in our community.

On behalf of the Board I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members, volunteers and supporters, all of whom ensure the continued success of Jessie's Centre.

Patricia D'Heureux



Labour Support Program

Belly Casting at Jessie's

"Volunteering in the Jessie's Labour Support Program continues to be one of my most cherished experiences. I have shared such intimate and transcending experiences with the moms at Jessie's. I have seen how these positive birth stories have ensured memories of empowerment. I have witnessed the strength and beauty birth provides for mothers and I plan to continue advocating for the parents who use Jessie's Centre through their pregnancy, the birth of their child and their transition into motherhood. Recently, we've begun creating belly casts for Jessie's teens, inviting them to participate in the Belly Casting workshops. It's so exciting to give them a beautiful impression of their belly as a keepsake of their incredible transformation into motherhood! Thank you to everyone at the center – for the opportunity to learn and share alongside you."



Sarah Anne Croxall, Labour Support Volunteer

"For the past year I have had the pleasure of being part of Jessie's labour support program. We started with an intensive (and fun!) weekend training course, where we learned about some of the myriad of issues that can affect teen moms, including the physiology of pregnancy and birth, the economics of teen parenthood, social pressures and breastfeeding. At our monthly meetings we focus on such topics with guest speakers, videos or other media to encourage discussion and sharpen our insight. We had one mother who generously shared her experience of domestic violence, an amazing chance to see, from the inside, a situation that many of the young women face. Our meetings also give us a chance to talk about our favourite things—the births! All of us who have had the privilege of attending a birth agree that it's one of the most amazing things we could be a part of. Discussion at our meetings allows us to process our experiences, and hopefully teach us more about labour support for the next time. Some of our group had the opportunity to be trained in belly casting. Once a month Jessie's set's up a session where the girls due around that time can have plaster molds made of their bellies. It's a beautiful memento of a unique and special time in their lives."

Shannon Ruley, Labour Support Volunteer

Young Parents No Fixed Address Respite Care Program

The Young Parents No Fixed Address (YPNFA) Respite Care Program continues to provide parents who are inadequately housed or lacking in social supports with a few days break. The program has succeeded in its aim to provide the children who are placed in respite placements with an exceptional one to one child care experience.

All providers have been known to provide specific programming for children based on their needs. One colicky child received infant massage relieving the colic during the placement. The parent was provided with the information to continue massage at home. Another provider specifically planned a trip to a maple syrup farm providing an outing this child may not otherwise have experienced. In the summer months all providers have been known to take children swimming, play in the community parks, and always ensure that the children placed in their care feel like they are a priority. When parents realize the high quality care their children receive they are able to relax and focus on their own plans. Needless to say it has been extremely beneficial to the families to be able to have well screened childcare providers caring for their children. No matter what the parent has used YPNFA Respite Placement for: moving, studying for exams, cleaning the house, doing the laundry, catching up on sleep, or even celebrating their birthday with friends, this program has made a significant difference in these families' lives. Last year the YPNFA Respite Care Program provided care to 51 children supporting 36 families. In the upcoming year, we plan to continue to provide the high level of care we have become known for, with an emphasis of trying to reach more parents who are isolated and living in shelters. All 7 of our volunteer respite providers deserve our gratitude. It is with their selfless dedication to the needs of the families who utilize this exceptional program that we are able to continually help families that need this extra support.

THANK YOU!

Deborah Connerty, YPNFA Respite Care Coordinator

Jessie's Centre and Toronto Intergenerational Partnership

Jessie's Centre for Teenagers is proud to have entered into a partnership with the Toronto Intergenerational Partnership (TIGP). TIGP is an organization that helps agencies throughout the Toronto area to develop volunteer programs that promote volunteerism between youth and the elderly. Sue McMahon from (TIGP) has been working with Deborah Connerty, the Jessie's Centre Coordinator of Volunteer Programs, to recruit seniors to the volunteer program at Jessie's Centre.

TIGP has also been developing innovative volunteer programs for teen parents. The friendly visitor program is a program that allows teenage parents to take their children to visit with seniors in the community. This program helps teen parents, break the isolation that many seniors experience living in the community, and it allows the parent to earn her volunteer hours to satisfy requirements from school or welfare. We also believe that this program will provide an opportunity for seniors to share the knowledge and experience they have gained over a lifetime with teen parents and that this is something that will benefit the entire community.

Tam's Story

Seventeen year old Tam began to use the programs at Jessie's when she was pregnant with her second child. She sought the support of our agency because her first child had been apprehended by child welfare at birth. Tam had experienced severe abuse by her partner during her first pregnancy and this time she committed to leaving the relationship that had led to her son being in care. While she was pregnant she used all the supports that Jessie's provided, attending prenatal classes and a prenatal nutrition group. At the same time she began the difficult process of personal growth by attending counselling with her counsellor at Jessie's. We then referred her to a specialized group for women who had experienced the trauma of the abuse she had experienced.

During the birth of her daughter she used a Jessie's Labour Support Volunteer. Initially child welfare planned to apprehend her second baby at birth but they decided to allow Tam the opportunity to parent her daughter when they became aware of the level of commitment she had made to her daughter and the support she had accepted from Jessie's.

During this process she made the painful decision to relinquish her first child for adoption. She decided it was in his best interest to have a permanent home as soon as possible and not bounce from one foster home to another. With her newborn baby she attended parenting support groups at Jessie's and created friendships with other young mothers in the program.

"As my daughter grew older I continued going to Jessie's. I went to the toddler parenting group because I found that I learned something new every time. No one is perfect in parenting, so we get to learn things from each others' experiences and we talked about it".

Tam returned to high school to get her life goals back on track. At her graduation she was acknowledged with many awards including: Ontario Scholar, the Children's Literary Fund Award, the Governor General's Medal for highest marks in her high school, the I.O.D.E. Bursary, the Senior Mathematics Award and the Senior Science Award at her school and she received a Jessie's scholarship. She accomplished all this while living on her own and parenting her daughter. Tam became a member of the Community Education Project at Jessie's. In this program she shares her life experiences with other youth and professionals so that they can better understand the issues of teen parents and mothers living in an abusive relationship. Tam is now in her second year at George Brown College in Behavioural Science Technology. She decided to do this course because **"I found the counsellor at Jessie's and the other social workers that I had worked with had inspired me to be the best that I can be. I just want to tell each one of them-Thank you!"**





Expanding Community Education

Jessie's Community Education Program (CEP) is poised for tremendous growth in the coming year. With new funding from the Trillium Foundation, the Raptors Foundation and the Tippet Foundation our program will reach more young people and professionals who are likely to work with young families. Created in 1998 with funding from the United Way of Greater Toronto Success by Six, the program has become an important community resource. The Community Education Project (CEP) is an outreach group of young parents (Jessie's current and past participants) who are trained to speak to groups in the community about their own experience and broader issues related to teenage pregnancy and parenting. The goal of the program is to break down negative stereotypes about young parents and to let young people know about the services at Jessie's Centre for Teenagers. This program has been overwhelmingly successful as both an important resource to the community and a powerful vehicle for building self-esteem and self-confidence among the young participants. Jessie's plans to expand this program to meet the growing demand for speaking engagements and to broaden its reach in the community.

With the new funding, we will be able to double the number of young parents who are trained to be a part of our program and to reflect a greater diversity among our participants. We will target all city high schools and reach more youth and professionals who are likely to work with young parents. We also plan on providing expanded training for our Community Education Participants on issues facing teens – healthy sexuality, family violence, poverty. With greater training, our speakers will be more knowledgeable on these issues, which will help them to be more effective as peer educators. The funding will also allow us to create a new up-to-date video that will allow us to deliver our messages more effectively, in a meaningful manner, to today's youth. We will also make the new video available to other agencies so their communities can benefit from this resource.

What High School students said after a visit from young parents from CEP:

- *"I never thought it was that hard. I thought it would be easy to have a child but during the presentation, it changed my mind. Try not to have sex until you are ready for it."*
- *"My impression of teen parents has definitely changed. I know not to come to quick judgements about people because I don't know their whole story."*
- *"It was great to hear from a father talking to other young men about responsibilities."*

What a University of Toronto medical student wrote after a visit:

"Yes, I am more impressed than I was at the strength these women exhibit in how they deal with their situation, especially with the barriers they have to surpass in being a pregnant teen. I am amazed at the resilience that these young women have! I think they gave us some excellent tips on how to be better physicians when it comes to dealing with pregnant teens and helping them feel comfortable in coming to do's"

What a Guidance Counsellor said after a presentation:

*"Rather than regarding it as a "stumbling block" in life, these parents related a generally positive life-changing experience as a result of the pregnancy and caring for their child."
"Many of us know how hard it is to be a teen parent, but it is easy to forget. This helps you to think about students who may be following in a similar path to the presenters and try and be more supportive."*

Dave's Story



Dave Lance and his sons Austin and Joshua

My name is Dave Lance. My girlfriend and I started using Jessie's when she was 18 years old and I was 20. She was three months pregnant at the time. We had been together for three years before she got pregnant. We were living together and had our ups and downs, but we felt we could handle being parents. Five and a half months into her pregnancy we found out we were having twins. We got more involved with Jessie's after that because we knew we needed even more support with two babies on the way. We broke up when the boys were one and a half years old. I became a single father to my wonderful boys Austin and Joshua.

I joined the Community Education Project two years ago because I really wanted to change people's perceptions of young fathers. I also wanted to reach out to other young men to let them know that they too can be parents and that fathering should be an equal responsibility.

I remember many of the speaking engagements I have done through the Community Education Project. I think the most touching presentation was going back to my old high school to let them know what life is like with children. Teenagers always say "it can't happen to me," but that day they saw it did happen to someone they went to school with. I believe that they will now rethink sex in general, and change the way they look at sex and kids.

Dave Lance is now a board member at Jessie's while still active in Community Education and a presenter in our Father's Group.

Veronica's Story

My name is Veronica Montague. I am a 24 year old single parent. I have a beautiful 7 year old daughter named Davena. I got pregnant when I was 15 years old because I was looking for someone to love me. After I had my daughter, I became depressed and suicidal. Luckily, that's not what the Lord had in mind for me. Counselors taught me to stop feeling sorry for myself. Teachers did not send me home when I took my daughter to school with me. They recognized that even though I was a teenage parent, I was trying to do my best to give myself and my daughter a future. Jessie's has helped me so much it is beyond words. I counted on them to help me whenever I could not afford to buy diapers or formula for my daughter. Their swap shop was also a magnificent help to me, as I could find clothes in new or very good condition for my daughter and myself.



At my high school graduation, I was presented with the Community Helping Hand Scholarship Award for my work with the children and youth in the Pape neighbourhood area. I just graduated from Centennial College's Child and Youth worker program. I earned several bursaries and scholarships during my time in this program. I worked very hard to maintain my academic level so that I would graduate on time with my peers.

I am currently an outreach worker with Jessie's Centre in their Community Education Program. I get to go out and share my experience as a teenage parent with others who are willing to listen. I have chosen to dedicate my life to helping children and youth because if I can help to change the life of one child, young person, or family then I have done my job. I have succeeded.

Since I started living on my own, I have accomplished several things, such as getting my driver's license, owning my own car, and graduating from college; however, the biggest accomplishment of all is watching my daughter grow into a beautiful young woman and realizing that we are both going to be ok.

Odaemin's Story

My name is Odaemin McKay Loescher. I became pregnant when I was 15 years old and am now 17. I started in Jessie's High School program when I was still pregnant.

I attended the Pre-natal classes and Food for Two and obtained Labour Support from a volunteer doula. Without this support, I don't know how I would have managed the two days of labour I endured. After my daughter Mikis was born, it was determined that she had kidney problems and I continued to receive support through the Well Baby Clinic. I was then referred to the Teen Clinic at Sick Children's Hospital. This helped me access the specialized care my child requires from a paediatrician who treats me like the responsible parent that I am.

I returned to the Jessie's High School program when my daughter was six months old. This permitted me to breastfeed and to attend the numerous medical appointments she required. She had several kidney infections during this time period. I would not have been able to continue in a regular school with all the time I had to spend in the hospital. I was able to complete a total of 8 high school credits at Jessie's.

I have lived at my parents' home during all this time period and have been supported by my parents. Jessie's has always provided me with encouragement and positive suggestions relating to my parents' involvement and contributions.

I decided to be in the Community Education Project because I wanted to educate people about how it really is to be a teen mother. The training helped me with my public speaking and confidence.

I think the Community Education Project makes a difference for youth because it teaches us that as young parents that we have something to offer our peers. It teaches other youth that parenting at a young age can be both difficult and rewarding. I think that being a parent so young has changed my life in a positive way, but I know it would have been easier for me if I didn't have a child. That is no longer an option for me, however, and I am happy to be my daughter's mother. Going to Jessie's and being a part of the Community Education Project has allowed me to feel good about who I am, where I am, and where I want to be in the future – our future.

For more information about the Community Education Program, contact the Program Coordinator, Cathie Leard at 416-365-1888 or cathie@jessiescentre.org.



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