

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

*Ekua Asabea Blair*

In January 2015, we received some terrific news. Wait for it! Massey Centre was accredited as a Children's Mental Health Centre by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA).

This is a great achievement for the Massey Centre. Participating in this process meant that the Board of Directors voluntarily agreed to the CCA review of our organization's activities against a set of mandatory and leading-practice standards in governance, stewardship, risk and safety, organizational planning performance, programs and services, community engagement, learning environment, human resources, volunteer programs and system structure. We had to meet all 32 mandatory standards and 80% of the 25 leading-practice standards. The Centre met the 32 mandatory standards; and 24 of the 25 leading-practice standards.

It took an extraordinary year of preparation for this comprehensive accreditation. Leading contributors in the effort included consultant Wangari Muriuki, hired to support our staff preparation process, and Accreditation Task Force Chair from the Board of Directors, Rachel Solomon, who provided leadership, support and guidance to both the Board and the Senior Management Team. Managers and many client-facing staff offered tremendous support at critical points in the process. Thank you for all your contributions.

After accreditation, came the licensing of our Prenatal Residential and Early Learning Centre programs and monitoring of the Secondary School. As with CCA accreditation, we were successful in the three reviews. Special thanks to the staff and management for these outcomes!

Our Section 23 School Day Treatment Program (Secondary School) recently held an emotionally uplifting Commencement event (see page 2). We are grateful to the 2015 scholarship donors for their support. I am particularly pleased at the creation this year of the Board of Directors Scholarship Fund.

The provision of parenting supports and interventions that allow our young moms and babies to bond, grow and learn together is a key pillar of our mandate. Please see our young client's article on page 7 about the importance of parenting.

We cannot offer programming without support from individual donors, foundations, corporations and special events, and must fundraise about 10% of our annual budget. Bowling for Babies (B4B) had its most successful year ever. We could not have exceeded our total fundraising target without the leadership and commitment of Susan Guichon, Chair, B4B Committee. Her team shattered our fundraising goal by raising over \$55,000! Thank You!



Graduate Danielle



# COMMENCEMENT DAY

Massey Centre Secondary School students had anticipated and prepared for their big day throughout the school year, and when Commencement Day finally arrived on Wednesday, June 17, 2015 the entire Centre was excited.

The ceremony was double-themed. Two young moms were Valedictorians: Celeste and Olina. Two young moms graduated: Danielle received her Ontario Secondary School Diploma and Jalisa was an honorary graduate who will be attending George Brown College in September and pursuing the Child and Youth Worker/Social Service Worker certification.

Valedictorians Celeste and Olina inspired guests, sharing their journeys to Commencement. Each had a journey filled with experiences, challenges and accomplishments, and not what they expected. But they persevered, reached across barriers and found themselves in new and expanding roles as young moms. Both girls stated that the Secondary School gave them the opportunity to explore their interests and become independent and complete individuals.

Stand-out moments at the ceremony included Olina's receipt of the Janet Arnoldi Literature Award for her writing skills. Olina's application portfolio outshone submissions by students across Toronto; and part of her winning entry will appear in a future Toronto District School Board (TDSB) publication. Jalisa received one of the 10 bursaries from the SMILE Foundation for young mothers pursuing post-secondary education.

Several certificates recognizing the students' academic efforts and achievements, and scholarships were awarded. These included the long-running Wilma P. Spence Scholarship, the Blair Family Scholarship, and the Dunlop-Harris Memorial Award, and new this year, the Board of Directors' Scholarship.

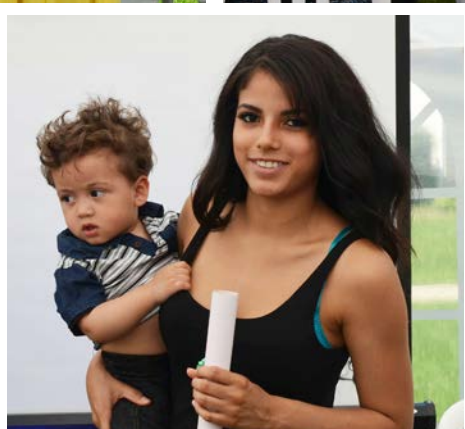
Event attendees included supportive parents; babies; partners; donors; Board members, staff, and volunteers; TDSB teachers and representatives; and representatives from several United Church Women's groups, The United Church of Canada Foundation, and The Toronto United Church Council.

As the young moms complete their high school diplomas, and proceed to higher education or training, they take with them the knowledge and accomplishments they have gained here.



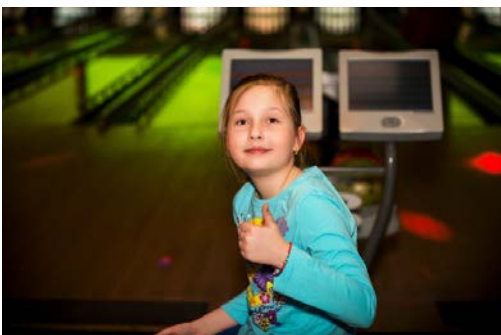
*Representatives from The United Church Women Groups, Foundation and Council, and Massey Centre Board attending Commencement Ceremony*







# 10<sup>TH</sup> BOWLING FOR BABIES EVENT



Successful is an excellent word to describe the 10th Annual Bowling for Babies event held on Sunday, February 22, 2015. It was cold but that did not deter the 75+ bowlers and 10 volunteers who came out for the event. The event was emceed by Marc Trinidad, an internationally known comedian and photographed by Mike and Robin Wilks.

The event was a tremendous success exceeding the revenues raised at the 9 previous events. Because of the generosity of donors, sponsors, and event volunteers we raised over \$55,500, an amazing 59% more than last year! We look forward to the pending challenge of exceeding that amount at the 2016 event. It is easy to understand why so many more people supported the event when they were asked. A Massey Centre supporter and event participant posted the following message on her giving page:

*"We are very lucky. Lucky to have families that love us, and children around to love. Jobs that pay well, that satisfy us, and we have the luxury of managing our fates.*

*Not everyone is born into such luck. Some of us are born into unfortunate circumstances, or genuinely make mistakes that result in grave consequences. We all made bad choices. And when we do, we have our loving network to help us through and cushion our pain. Not everyone is that lucky.*

*Help me raise money for young girls that have no support, felt no love, have nowhere to go, and need help to learn how to love themselves and their babies, so that we collectively can build a better future for them, and by extension, for ourselves.*

*I have three girls, and as girls, they have to make many correct choices. This hits home."* **Diana Avigdor**

## SILENT AUCTION DONORS

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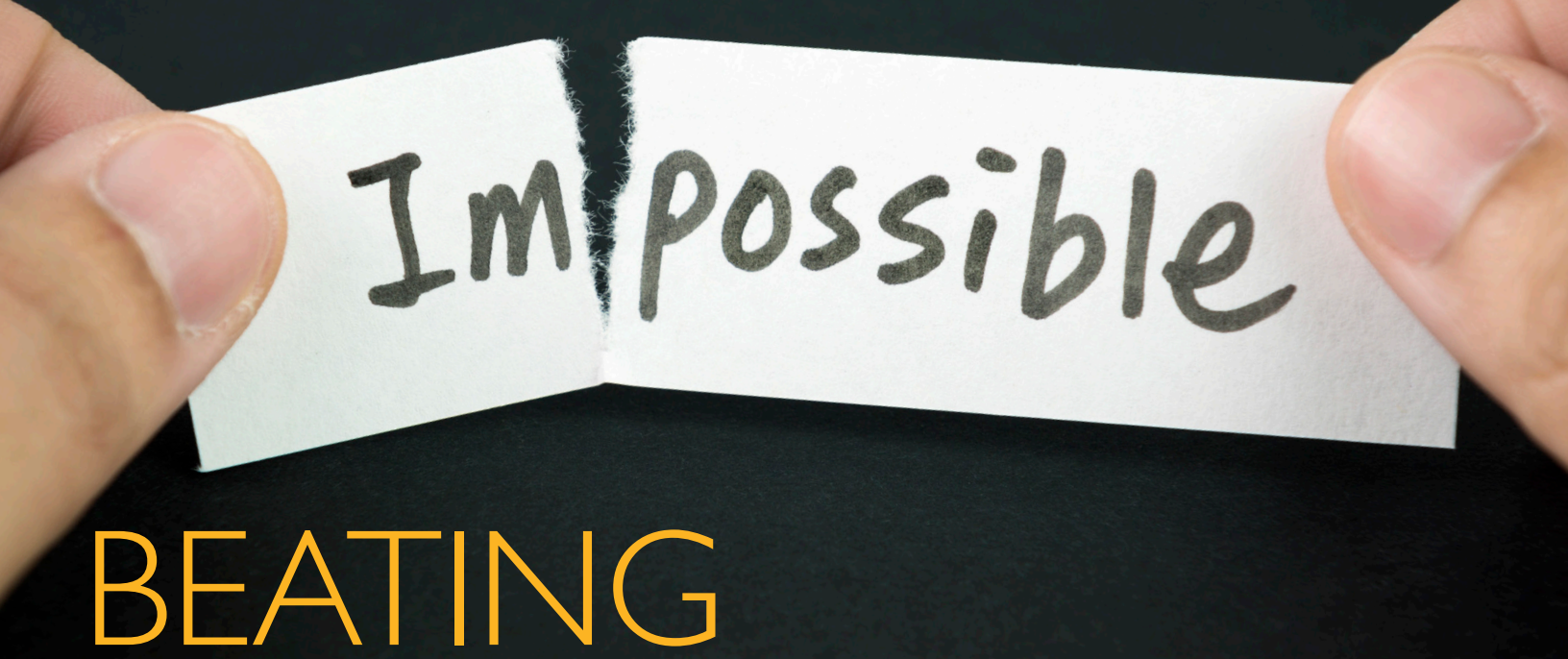
## SPONSORS

GOLD  
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TORONTO CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

*We could not have done it without you, thank you!*



Impossible

# BEATING THE ODDS

McKenzie looks forward to starting George Brown College in September. She will be studying Early Childhood Education.

The future was not always this bright for this teenaged mother. At a young age McKenzie was diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) which had a great impact on her ability to focus and excel in a typical classroom. McKenzie was pleased that she had beaten the odds stacked against her to finish high school.

Not long after graduating from high school (she is the first person in her family to do this) McKenzie found out she was pregnant during a regular doctor's visit. She was in her second trimester.

McKenzie had been "enjoying her life" and due to her behaviour and drug use, had been asked to leave her mother's home. When McKenzie's mother found out that she was pregnant she asked her daughter to move back home. She did when she was 7 ½ months.

She tried to eat well and stopped drinking and using drugs so that she could deliver a healthy baby. McKenzie experienced anxiety during her pregnancy because she feared her FASD diagnosis would be passed unto her unborn child. This worry was compounded by the fact that she was drinking during the first trimester before she knew that she was pregnant.

Children's Aid Society intervened and McKenzie welcomed them because she wanted all the support she could have. The father of her unborn child did not remain involved for long leaving McKenzie on her own at age 19.

In June 2012 McKenzie gave birth to a beautiful and healthy baby girl, Elizabeth, but her living arrangement with her mom quickly deteriorated. They disagreed about most things. McKenzie did not want her young daughter to live with the violence and yelling so she contacted Massey Centre for safe and stable housing.

McKenzie and Elizabeth lived in a Massey Centre one-bedroom furnished apartment for 6 months. McKenzie attended all the programs and parenting groups offered during the day while Elizabeth was being cared for in the Early Learning Centre.

At the end of 6 months, they moved into the townhouse program. McKenzie could now begin thinking about going to college. With the support of staff, McKenzie applied to George Brown College and was accepted.

McKenzie is proud of herself and wants to model success for her daughter. She credits many of the supports she received at the Centre with her accomplishments today. She says that without Massey Centre providing a stable home for her and her daughter; parenting, life skills, financial literacy programs; and counselling support, her life would be very different and College would not be just a few months away. McKenzie says that her stay here has helped her prepare for the future she now envisions.



# GET INVOLVED

Here are some easy ways you can help Massey Centre to continue providing support, treatment and other services for the vulnerable pregnant and parenting young moms, aged 13-25 and their babies living at the Centre or in the community.

You can:

- Make a donation today
- Become a *Best Start Monthly Giving* donor
- Host an event and designate the proceeds to Massey Centre
- Honour someone's special occasion or memory with a gift to Massey Centre
- Remember Massey Centre in your Will
- Become a member, attend, and vote at the 2015 Annual General Meeting
- Tell others about the work of Massey Centre
- Volunteer and support the young moms and babies



## GIFTS WITH VISION

If you need new and meaningful gifts, please consider The United Church of Canada's giving catalogue that contains gifts that support children and youth, education, poverty and hunger, and other programs in Canada and internationally.

Massey Centre is delighted to be one of the organizations featured in the 2014-2015 Gifts with Vision catalogue. You can select a gift for a loved one, a friend, a colleague—people who simply do not need more stuff.

Thank you donors for selecting Massey Centre to receive your gifts. You are helping to transform young lives.

This catalogue is available until September 2015.

Visit <http://www.giftswithvision.ca/project/nurture-new-lives> and give the gift of hope.

## SAVE THE DATE

### 2014–2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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WHEN:

Tuesday, September 15, 2015  
6:00 p.m.

WHERE:

Massey Centre ELC/OYEC Building  
1102 Broadview Avenue  
Toronto, ON M4K 2S5

More information will follow in August 2015.

If you have questions, please contact Ruth at [rtaylor@massey.ca](mailto:rtaylor@massey.ca)  
or call 416-425-6348 ext. 221.



# A PREGNANT 16 YEAR OLD'S VIEWS ON PARENTHOOD

Many people view parenthood as a great commitment. Being a parent is very challenging, but it brings a new life full of love and happiness.

Parenting might be the most difficult and stressful job on earth, but at the end of the day the hard work pays off. In my opinion parenthood is about great leadership, guidance, loving and understanding your child.

Parenting involves lots of leadership because you are not only taking care of yourself, but another human being as well. You have to make sure you can stay on a firm budget, be able to provide for yourself and child, and take action wherever you are in the right way. As a parent you have to make sure you are committed to the growth and development of your children. There will be lots of sacrifices made in which you as a parent will need to take leadership.

You have to be aware that everything you do as a parent will be reflected in your child and everyone expects the parent to be the best they can be. You are a role model and your child will always look to you for guidance. Parenting is mostly about guiding your child. As a parent your job is to hold out a vision of success for your children, to support them as much as possible so they can grow as individuals, to give them strength, and make them believe in themselves. Parenting is about creating and sustaining a positive vision for your child to follow.

Parenting is about understanding and loving your child. You cannot possibly be ready to raise a child if you can't love or understand your child. Without these traits you could never be a good parent whether or not you have other parenting traits. Children rely on love and understanding and without them will grow to be angrier and more miserable than others. Children need their parents to understand their decisions whether they are good or bad. They need their parents to be there for them and guide them to the right path, but to do this the parent needs to understand their children and always love them no matter what the situation.

# Donation Form

☐ YES! I want to help new young moms and their babies start new successful lives!

Here is my gift of: ☐ \$50    ☐ \$100    ☐ \$250    ☐ \$500    ☐ I will give \$\_\_\_\_\_

☐ YES! I will join the **Best Start** Monthly Giving Program\* with my gift on the **last** day of each month of: ☐ \$10    ☐ \$20    ☐ \$25    ☐ \$50    ☐ I will give \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Options

☐ I would like to give by: ☐ Cheque    or    ☐ Money Order

My cheque or money order payable to **Massey Centre** is enclosed.

☐ Please charge my    ☐     ☐     ☐ 

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name exactly as shown on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name for Acknowledgement Purposes (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\* I can revoke or change my authorization at any time in writing or by calling 416-425-6348 x 224, subject to providing 30 days' notice.

\* I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to be reimbursed for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this Pre-authorization Debit (PAD) Agreement.

\* To obtain a cancellation form, or for more information on my right to cancel a PAD Agreement or my recourse rights, I may contact my financial institution or visit [www.cdnpay.ca](http://www.cdnpay.ca).

Massey Centre protects your private information and complies with all legislative requirements. We will send you information from time to time. If you wish to limit, or not receive any correspondence in the future, please contact us at 416.425.6347 x 224.

## Thank you for your support!



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