

## Message from the CEO

Our mandate is to serve vulnerable young single women and help them break the cycle of poverty. According to the most recent annual report of anti-poverty group Campaign 2000, 38.2% of single mothers in Ontario live in poverty.

Poverty has an indisputable impact on the lives of the vulnerable young women and children we serve. Our efforts are focussed on helping our clients access the critical resources and skills to break the cycle of poverty and live independently in the community. One strategy to meet this objective is our secondary school treatment program. The young mothers have opportunities to finish high school and continue post-secondary education or training.

In October 2014, the Section 23 Secondary School Treatment Program was restructured to improve the credit-earning capacity of our young moms. This means that it is possible, with the revised curriculum, for a student in the school program to earn a credit every six or seven weeks. Attending the Massey Centre school she can now earn up to six credits each year. This restructuring, in partnership with the Toronto District School Board, has resulted in improved attendance and morale of the students.

When a young mother has earned her high school diploma and wants to pursue post-secondary education or training, she now has the opportunity to participate in the New Lives Start Here program enabling her to continue to live in affordable transitional housing for up to four more years. Several enthusiastic young Massey mothers have already made this transition, thereby investing in brighter futures for themselves and their children.

Massey Centre is addressing the poverty issues affecting our client community. Our efforts—and those of our clients—are definitely bearing the fruits of success for the young parents and their babies. We are grateful for the continued support of our Board, staff, volunteers, funders and donors who all help to make this possible.

**Ekua Asabea Blair**  
Chief Executive Officer



Graduate, and students and their babies at the Section 23 Secondary School Treatment program's June 2014 Convocation Ceremony.

# Volunteering at the Massey Centre is very Rewarding

I came across the Massey Centre while researching community-based health and education organizations in Toronto. I was immediately impressed with the variety of important services available at the Centre, each structured to support young women and their families. The goal of building an empowering community for resident mothers was evident, and I was excited to contribute to this important work. I now visit the Centre weekly as a parent relief volunteer in the Prenatal Residential program.

I have been very pleased with my experience volunteering at the Centre, and would highly recommend the opportunity to others. As a new member of the team, I participated in a thorough orientation process and was immediately paired with a more experienced volunteer for shadowing and mentorship sessions. The team at the Massey Centre ensured that I had the knowledge and confidence to volunteer in my chosen role.

My experience volunteering at the Massey Centre has been incredibly rewarding. The mothers are very grateful for volunteers' time spent in parent relief, and the staff creates a welcoming space for interaction among the families and volunteers. I have been privileged to watch the babies grow in this supportive and healthy environment, and volunteering at the Centre is truly the highlight of my week.

- Meghan Mullaly

## Why I Volunteer

On the occasion of my retirement, I was looking for a new volunteer opportunity—something different from the volunteering I had previously done with the elderly. As a long-time East Yorker, I had driven by Massey Centre for Women so many times and thought this might be the place for me.

"New lives start here" Massey Centre's motto, signified hope to me and the Centre didn't disappoint. Once I had successfully completed the thorough recruitment process—interview, questionnaire, criminal reference check, medical report, personal references and signing my agreement to observe the Centre's policies—I was ready to go.

I still remember my first "parent relief" session almost 10 years ago. It had been many years since I had looked after a newborn and I was very nervous. But, as I soon discovered, so was the new mom. She was very hesitant about giving up the care of this most precious, tiny baby to a complete stranger. Mom checked in on the baby and me periodically over the next two hours and we bonded and laughed about our shared anxiety. Of course, the little guy slept through the whole thing! Many parent relief sessions later, I have learned a lot: how to put on the new style of disposable diapers, the correct use of the curved bottle, how many scoops of formula to put in cooled bottle of boiled water, and that baby seats now vibrate!

I never get tired of holding a new baby in my arms, their soft breath when they sleep, their delightful smell, the smile of recognition when you do something funny, their hearty grip when they grab your finger, and the profound relief of a "man-sized" burp.

The plucky young moms who give birth to these tiny miracles love their babies to the moon and back and are determined to give the newborns a good life. Without exception, the moms have always thanked me for looking after their babies, but I think I should be thanking them for the opportunity.

- Judi Christou

# Mothers at Massey Centre Host Art Show

By Ali Raza, East York Mirror, Jul 30, 2014  
(reprinted with permission – East York Mirror)

Summer school students at Massey Centre who are young expectant mothers and mothers with children hosted their first art exhibit on Monday. The students developed their art skills in courses as part of the centre's Secondary School Treatment Program.

In partnership with the Toronto District School Board, Massey Centre offers young and expecting mothers a chance to complete their high school credits and continue to self-develop. They can complete their credits while caring for their babies in the classroom or preparing for birth.

"The idea is to encourage young women to continue post-secondary education," said Ekua Asabea Blair, Massey Centre chief executive officer.

"Many of the women are behind in their studies due to stopping to raise a child."

With no prior art experience, the students showcased several kinds of art including: pop, storybooks, graffiti, watercolour and murals. Much of the art reflected the love the young mothers felt for their babies; names and faces of their children dominated the theme of their art.

Some students live at Massey Centre while others come from surrounding communities. Blair says because of the stigma attached to being a young parent, art offers a means for young

mothers to express themselves. The aim is to let women realize their potential while staying sensitive to challenges facing new mothers.

"We want to help them cope with the stigma and the stress," Blair said. "We know it's not the end of the world, they can still finish high school, they can still develop their life skills they need to live as adults in the community."

One of the mothers, Jalisa Orr, 20, completed her summer school courses while raising her two-month old daughter. She scored an overall average of more than 80 per cent, for which she was given an award at the art showcase. She'll be returning to Massey Centre in September to complete her Grade 12 credits.

"I used to live in the residential area, so that's how I got interested in the school program," Orr said. "I started going last year in November, I've completed my credits so I wanted to continue so I can finish high school."

"I think I'd like to do social work, I like to help people, I spoke to a lot of the social workers here and I know what they do for us so I want to do that for others too," she added.

Massey Centre has provided the Secondary School Treatment program for the past five years. It continues to provide other programs and support to address needs of young pregnant women and new mothers.



Staff photo/NICK PERRY

Jalisa Orr reads to her daughter Naomi from a picture book that she made as part of an art program at Massey Centre during an event to celebrate the conclusion of the program Monday.

# Striving for Quality

## 2014 Client Satisfactory Results

Massey Centre is committed to being accessible to those in need and ensuring that the programs and services are meeting the challenging and changing needs of the young moms, babies, and families. Last summer 53 clients responded to a centre-wide client satisfaction survey and here are some of the highlights of what they revealed.

Clients learn about the programs and services from (in descending order):

- friends or family
- referral by community agencies such as Children's Aid Society of Toronto/Catholic Children's Aid Society
- shelter or family doctor
- Massey Centre website

Our young families reported satisfaction with:

- increased knowledge about their children's developmental stages
- enhanced parenting skills and life skills
- opportunity for children to develop social skills
- opportunity for parents/caregivers to build social networking skills and learn about different cultures
- safe and stable housing
- increased sense of responsibility and independence
- quality and variety of food served to the children
- increased access to education and community resources
- opportunity to earn a secondary school credit in four weeks during the summer

Clients expressed a need for improvement or increase in:

- opportunities for client input in programs
- children's reading time
- parent/teacher meetings to discuss children's progress
- variety of program activities and materials
- workshops on daycare options
- program hours during the winter
- orientation process

We continue to make changes that align with our mandate to ensure enhanced experiences for every client.





# A note from some of the moms

January 9th, 2015

We really appreciate your help & your kindness. We are very happy to have you guys supporting us & having your guidance. We are thankful for being a part of the Massey Centre. There is no place else that we would rather be because we have everything here, for us & the babies. We thank you all staff for the help because it isn't easy to be on our own raising a baby alone without the support we have here from you guys. I want to give a big thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



# Get Involved

There are so many ways you can help the Massey Centre to continue providing support, treatment and other services for the vulnerable pregnant and parenting young moms and their babies living at the Centre or in the community.

You can:

- 1 – Participate in the 10th Annual Bowling for Babies event on Sunday, February 22, 2015
- 2 – Make a donation
- 3 – Become a **Best Start Monthly Giving** donor
- 4 – Host an event and designate the proceeds to the Massey Centre
- 5 – Honour someone's special occasion or memory with a gift to Massey Centre
- 6 – Remember the Massey Centre in your Will
- 7 – Become a member, attend, and vote at the 2015 Annual General Meeting
- 8 – Tell others about the work of the Massey Centre
- 9 – Volunteer and support the young moms and babies



Volunteer staff team from Branksome Hall (school), November 7, 2014.

## Gifts with Vision

Searching for new and meaningful gifts?

The United Church of Canada has developed a giving catalogue with suggested gifts that support children and youth, education, poverty and hunger, rights relations, language revitalization and other programs in Canada and internationally.

The 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. *"I love Gifts with Vision. My family doesn't need more stuff, more things. This is perfect."* - 2013 donor

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





# 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Bowling For Babies

PLEASE JOIN THE MASSEY CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S 10TH ANNUAL BOWLING FOR BABIES FUNDRAISER



# STRIKES. TURKEYS. GUTTER BALLS. FOR A CAUSE

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2015 - 12PM - 3PM

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33 SAMOR RD. TORONTO



FOR OVER 113 YEARS MASSEY CENTRE HAS PROVIDED HOME, HELP AND REFUGE FOR DISADVANTAGED PREGNANT AND PARENTING ADOLESCENTS, AGED 13-21 AND THEIR BABIES.

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#### Visit [massey.ca](http://massey.ca)

- for instructions to set up a personal online pledge page
- to print a pledge form to collect donations
- for sponsorship information
- to make a donation

For more information,  
please contact  
Paulett at 416-426-6348 x 224 or  
[pramsey@massey.ca](mailto:pramsey@massey.ca)

# 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    ☐ Visa    ☐ MasterCard    ☐ American Express

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

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

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

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

\*I understand that I can revoke or change this authorization at any time in writing or by calling the Director, Resource Development at 416-425-6348 x 224, subject to providing 15 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 payment agreement. To obtain a cancellation form, or for more information on my right to cancel a pre-authorized payment 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 the office at 416.425.6347 x 224.

## Thank you for your support!



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Charitable Registration No 11928 3687 RR0001

Published by: Resource Development  
Design: Ramp Communications, [ramped.ca](http://ramped.ca)