



Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre
 Centre de traitement pour enfants d'Ottawa
 Founded in 1951 Fondé en 1951

Connections

Creating opportunities today;
 maximizing independence tomorrow.

Spring 2013

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Connections is the official newsletter of the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre (OCTC)

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A day in the life of a Paralympian

What's it like to be a Paralympian? Five clients at OCTC, between the ages of seven and 13 years with a physical disability, had a chance to be Paralympians in their own way — joining 26 other children from the community.

Thanks to the Run, Wheel, Jump, Throw program, held every Wednesday evening in Orleans from October 24 to December 12, 2012, the children built on the four fundamental movement skills of running, wheeling, jumping and throwing — the foundation upon which countless sporting and physical activity skills are developed. The program was offered by OCTC's Recreation Therapy program in collaboration with the Ottawa Lions Club. Training was provided through the National Coaching Certification Program and Athletics Canada.

On the final day of the program, the children, along with family members and friends, had a wonderful opportunity to see excellence in action and cheered on their favourite athletes. A big bonus of the evening was a chance to train with two Ottawa Paralympians, Jason Dunkerley and his guide Josh Karanja. Jason and Josh led the children through a typical Paralympian training session, complete with warm-up exercises and skills development. The children also had a chance to run blindfolded with a guide.

After the workout, Jason and Josh shared their inspiring story, answered questions and displayed the medals they had won at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. They won bronze in the men's 1, 500 m and silver in the 5,000 m for athletes with visual impairments. •

OCTC's Recreation Therapy program is supported by individuals, corporations and foundations through the OCTC Foundation. Those that have supported the program for many years include the Community Foundation of Ottawa, Sens Foundation, Harry P. Ward Foundation and Harry E. Foster Foundation. Thanks for your support!



Isabella Mackay was thrilled to receive a certificate from Paralympians Jason Dunkerley and Josh Karanja.



You could say that Jacob-Emmanuel Doyle and Luca "Lazylegz" Patuelli have a history, one that has grown into a powerful relationship. They were first introduced at a *Changing Minds Changing Lives* presentation, organized by OCTC and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, where Jacob-Emmanuel was inspired by Luca's words and actions. They had another opportunity to work together when they breakdanced as part of OCTC's 60th anniversary celebrations.

Since then, Luca has inspired Jacob-Emmanuel to work towards walking without his walker. And, the two have vowed to one day walk 2 km together, independently of their assistive devices. That dream came closer to reality when Luca surprised Jacob-Emmanuel at an OCTC track and field event. They haven't yet made 2 km, but they're on their way! •

The annual “For the Kids” Charitable Auction

Join us and more than 800 leaders from communities across Eastern Ontario on April 29, 2013, for a fabulous evening at the iconic Ottawa Convention Centre!

The “For the Kids” Charitable Auction is sponsored by several leading businesses, including our diamond sponsors: **Minto Group Inc., Ottawa Convention Centre, TD Bank Group** and **1310NEWS**.

Our objectives are to bring the “For the Kids” Charitable Auction to higher levels by increasing fundraising results year after year and to build awareness and increase visibility of the Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre. For the first time in 2013, all proceeds will be allocated to the OCTC Foundation, which raises funds to benefit close to 4,000 children and youth with disabilities.

Over \$232,000 was raised last year, and we are aiming to surpass that ambitious goal in 2013.

Guests will have the opportunity to bid on over 300 silent auction items and packages and participate in the live auction, which will be hosted by auctioneer Dave Smith, and Carter Brown and Sandra Plagakis of KISS FM.

Participants will enjoy an elegant cocktail-style buffet dinner. The bidding is fun, the competition friendly and the networking opportunities numerous.

Please contact us at 613-738-4335 or at nbernard@octc.ca to reserve your tickets or tables. Tables for 10 start at \$1,500. Individual tickets are \$150 each, eligible for a \$90 tax receipt. •



Carter Brown and Sandra Plagakis of KISS FM 105.3 are shown with Charlene Macpherson (right), whose daughter attends the OCTC School.



Each year in conjunction with International Day of Persons with Disabilities, celebrated on December 3, Citizen Advocacy holds **Celebration of**

People, an annual awards program and dinner event. The awards recognize the achievements and contributions of individuals, businesses and organizations promoting accessibility, inclusion and full community participation by citizens with disabilities.

Award categories are: Accessibility by Design; Advocacy Award in Memory of Agnes Wee; Career Award; Citizenship Award in Memory of Cathy Kerr; Education Award; Employee Award; Employer Award; Volunteer Award; and Youth Award in Memory of Susan Meyer. OCTC sponsors this last award, which recognizes a youth with a disability who has demonstrated excellence and perseverance in achieving a significant personal goal or in serving others. For 2012, OCTC staff nominated Tyrone Henry, Celina Salamani and Cat Millar for the Youth Award, and Shelley Johnston for the Volunteer Award.

Youth Award recipient: Tyrone Henry

Tyrone Henry learned at age 16 that he would never walk again. His response was, “Well, I never really thought I would make it to the NHL, but maybe now I’ll just have to try to join the sledge hockey team.” Tyrone threw himself into a hand cycle and got actively engaged in sledge hockey, wheelchair racing, waterskiing and alpine skiing. He was selected to

2012 Celebration of People Award recipients

complete three endurance legs of Rick Hansen’s relay across Canada, including the famously difficult Thermal Hill in Coquitlam, B.C. He has spoken to teachers, administrators, parents and students in local schools about his experiences and was awarded the South Carleton High School’s Principal Award of Merit in recognition of his leadership.

At the Celebration of People award ceremony, Tyrone thanked OCTC for sponsoring the award, Emily Glossop in the Recreation Therapy program at OCTC for nominating him, and his family and friends for their continued support. •



Third-party fundraising for OCTC's kids

EllisDon

Over the past year and a half, EllisDon, a major building company, along with its subcontractors and project management team, collectively raised \$5,600 for OCTC, where Aiden Babb was a client during his short life. Aiden, whose father is a company's client representative, died at the age of six in 2005.

Fundraising included weekly BBQs, where hockey jerseys and Ottawa Senators tickets were raffled. All the revenues went into a special charity account. EllisDon Ottawa graciously matched fundraising dollar for dollar, EllisDon Corporate donated \$1,000 per employee, and four employees donated their time and effort for the charity — bringing the grand total donation to \$15,206.

"The ongoing support of the subtrades was a key element in our ability to raise money for OCTC," said Jennifer Hebert, senior project coordinator. "We could not have done it without everyone's help."

"On behalf of the children and youth who will benefit from this generous contribution, thank you to



EllisDon representatives (left to right) Jonathon Decker, Howard Babb, Jennifer Hebert and Dan Astles are shown with Chantal Dompierre, executive director of the OCTC Foundation, and Kathleen Stokely, CEO of OCTC.

EllisDon and, in particular, to Jennifer Hebert for her involvement," said Chantal Dompierre, executive director of the OCTC Foundation.

Adjeleian Allen Rubeli Limited

Ottawa engineering firm Adjeleian Allen Rubeli Limited has been supporting different causes under its Christmas fundraising initiative. In December 2011 and 2012, Brenda Squires collected donations from her colleagues to benefit the children at OCTC, with the company generously matching the amount.

Thanks to the generosity of Adjeleian Allen Rubeli Limited, children with special needs at the OCTC School have been enjoying a new adapted swing since the summer of 2012. They now have the opportunity to safely experience the exhilaration and fun of swinging in the school's backyard. In addition, OCTC will be able to purchase therapeutic listening equipment for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, sensory integration disorder, mild autism, pervasive developmental disorder or motor delays. •

Justin Vienneau and Brenda Squires (on the left) present a cheque to Leslie Walker, principal of the OCTC School, and Chantal Dompierre, executive director of the OCTC Foundation.



OCTC's literacy study

Literacy — the ability to communicate — is an important element in achieving quality of life and independence.

Individuals with severe speech and physical impairments who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) demonstrate very low rates of literacy. For these people who are unable to speak, how does one improve their quality of life and foster independence?

In partnership with the University of Ottawa, OCTC's Literacy Committee looked at literacy instruction for students with cerebral palsy who don't speak and use AAC in the Ottawa region. The goal was to evaluate whether instructional strategies complied with best practices.

Through a questionnaire format, 18 parents of OCTC clients with severe speech and physical impairments, along with nine educators (including school-based therapists), were asked to indicate if what they did (supply) or what they asked for (demand) complied with the best practices that were presented in the questionnaires.

RESULTS:

- Parents provide 33% of the best practices and request 22%.
- Educators offer 37% of the best practices and recommend 21%.
- For the seven children for whom data were collected by

both parents and educators, 36% were classified as a "perfect match" (what the parent or teacher did or asked for is consistent with the best practices), while 29% were classified as "neglected targets" (best practices were neither provided nor asked for).

Gaps *do* exist between best and actual practices. OCTC will be conducting further research to explore the sources of these gaps and to develop strategies to narrow these gaps. Stay tuned! •



OCTC's Literacy Committee (left to right): Jocelyn Barden-Underhill, speech-language pathologist; Leslie Walker, principal, OCTC School; Amita Furgoch, occupational therapist; Pascal Lefebvre, professor, University of Ottawa; and Dr. Jean Ju, psychologist.

Awards for dedication, commitment and quality

Our employees are dedicated and committed. They are passionate about what they do and they provide quality care and service to our clients and families. Every year, OCTC honours years of service. This year, 39 employees who provided 470 years of service collectively were recognized:

- 30 years – Sharon Doucette;
- 25 years – Jocelyn Barden-Underhill, Marie Brien, Julie Caissie, Beverly Ingram, Bronwen Jones and Ann Marcotte;
- 20 years – Joanne Breton and Kim Ferguson;
- 15 years – Shannon Thériault and Elizabeth Cuddy;
- 10 years – Michelle Andre, Sarah Bell, Natalie Côté, Letty D’Ermo-Salahor, Paulina Finak, Lara Haddad, Elaine Hendry,

Pauline Jodouin, Sandi Lawson, Karen Levinson, Bonnie Lowry-Bagshaw, Edith Murchison, Emma Novak, Gabrielle Paquette-Pharand, Margaret Saba and Wendy Sarsons; and

- 5 years – Micheline Benoit, Laura Bradley, Chantal Chatigny, Andrea Harrison, Fatima Humayun, Caroline Johnston, Caroline Malcolmson, Shanon Ménard, Anne Pehleman, Lyse Raniere, Darren Scott and Leslie Walker.



INSPIRE TO SERVE, for client/customer service

Nominees:

Hélène Courchesne & Lisa-Marie Loeffen
Denyse Deslauriers

Goldcare Team: Christine Casselman, Paulina Finak, Amita Furgoch, Sandra Hartnell, Anne Huot, Phany Keo, Elaine Kerr, Manon Lavoie, Tammy Lévesque, Ann Marcotte, Pauline McGee, Emma Novak, Lyse Raniere, Darren Scott & Amanda Young

Michelle Hamelin-Purcell

Pauline Jodouin

Dianne Lavergne

Pauline McGee

Tonette Megens

Sandy Schafer

INSPIRE TO IMPROVE, for creativity & innovation

Nominees:

Natalie Côté & Anne Wittich

Charlotte Hardie, Barb Juett & Lisa-Marie Loeffen

CRISP–Goldcare Steering Committee: Anne Huot, Elaine Kerr & Pauline McGee

2012 OCTC Walking Challenge organizing team (subcommittee of the Human Resources Advisory Committee): Sandra Hartnell, Lisa-Marie Loeffen, Rachel Stoparczyk & Barb Juett

Shannon Thériault

INSPIRE TO LEARN, for teaching & learning

Nominees:

Julie Baccin, Anne McLellan & Sandy Schafer

Ariane Gélinas & Elaine Hendry

Geneviève Tibi

Lori-Anne Van Moorsel & Eduardo Guerra



Julie Baccin (pictured), Anne McLellan and Sandy Schafer received the Inspire to Learn Award for providing exceptional learning opportunities for the volunteers and students, and their openness to learn from them during the Tools for School Group.



The Goldcare Team — Anne Huot, Paulina Finak and Sandra Hartnell (in photo), and Christine Casselman, Amita Furgoch, Phany Keo, Elaine Kerr, Manon Lavoie, Tammy Lévesque, Ann Marcotte, Pauline McGee, Emma Novak, Lyse Raniere, Darren Scott and Amanda Young — won for its patience, understanding, support and teamwork in responding to questions and requests for assistance from staff, thus ensuring a smooth transition to Goldcare.



Shannon Thériault won for her enthusiastic pursuit of innovative ideas for equipment adaptations and for thinking beyond the boundaries of current methods to deliver best possible outcomes to address client needs.

Spotlight on OCTC volunteers: woodworking and sewing program

Each year, adapted products and clothing help between 75 and 100 OCTC clients with varying disabilities increase their independence and accomplish everyday activities. Here are just two examples: weighted vests and blankets give proprioceptive (one's own perception) feedback through the joints, which can provide a calming effect for clients with this sensory need; and prone boards promote body alignment while the child is weight-bearing, which benefits bone density and circulation.

But custom-designed therapeutic equipment and clothing for children with complex special needs can be very costly. Enter OCTC's volunteer woodworking and sewing program, which helps families purchase these items at a fraction of what they would cost commercially.

Seventeen volunteers work behind the scenes — in their home workshops or sewing rooms — to produce adapted equipment and sew clothing for children served by the OCTC. They donate their time, skills, tools and equipment to this effort — a significant community contribution for which OCTC families are continually thankful.

Ronald K. Collings / Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre Volunteer Memorial Fund

In 2012, through donations from family members, the OCTC Foundation established the Ronald K. Collings / Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre Volunteer Memorial Fund, in memory of Ron, a volunteer woodworker at OCTC for 13 years. Ron not only passionately built special equipment for children with disabilities, but also served tirelessly for other community organizations. For his volunteer contributions, he was awarded the Robert McGibbon OCTC Volunteer of the Year Award and United Way Ottawa's Community Builder Award.

Through this fund, families are offered custom-built, therapeutic equipment for half of the cost of the materials. Money collected from the families is put back into the fund to help with future purchases of supplies. •



Luke Wadden enjoys his corner seat, made by Henry Jacques, an OCTC volunteer woodworker.

Caution: Parents Learning service benefits April and Zakery

Since last May, 27-year-old April, who has learning difficulties, has been receiving one-on-one instruction on how to properly care for her baby — when Zakery was just three weeks old.

And it's all thanks to an individualized in-home parent education program called Caution: Parents Learning.

The City of Ottawa provides funding to OCTC to deliver the service, which is designed to help mothers of children, from aged zero to six years, learn how to care for and interact with their child. An OCTC behavioural consultant — in April's case, Sharon Doucette — visits the mother in her home either weekly or bi-weekly. Each visit lasts between one and two hours.

April is so pleased to be benefiting from this service. She has learned specific skills, such as how to sterilize baby bottles, make baby food, secure Zakery safely in a highchair or stroller, and hold, feed and bathe him. She has also learned how to recognize when Zakery is hungry, tired, full or needs changing. "In the beginning I couldn't do much without a worker being with me because of my learning difficulties," says April.

Sharon is also teaching April how to interact with Zakery — through play, singing and reading, for example. In the area of child development, April is also learning how to teach Zakery how to feed himself.

"It has meant a lot to have Sharon here," says April. "I have learned so much." •



NEW DONOR TO THE OCTC FOUNDATION

Thanks to the CIBC Children's Foundation's \$5,000 donation to the Recreation Therapy program, many children, including Bryce Desrochers, thrive because of this program.

"He needed to be seen and heard. In came recreational services where Bryce was given the opportunity to flourish and grow, both in the Centre's programs and in the community-based programs. He has grown into an incredible young boy who has benefited immensely," wrote his parents Michelle and Rolly Desrochers in a letter to the OCTC Foundation.

The CIBC Children's Foundation administers the funds raised from Miracle Day, an employee-driven fundraiser that takes place on the first Wednesday in December. Since its inception, Miracle Day has raised \$64 million for children's charities across Canada and \$214 million globally. The Foundation's three areas of focus are health, education and well-being of children. Programs funded by the Foundation provide vital support services and enrichment opportunities to young people in their formative years that may not otherwise be accessible. •

Ombudsman investigating crisis situation

On the heels of 63 initial complaints from unhappy families dissatisfied with the current workings of the developmental services system, the Ontario Ombudsman has launched an investigation into the province's services for adults with developmental disabilities who are in crisis situations. André Marin made the announcement on November 29, 2012. To date, the Ombudsman's office has received over 450 complaints, with about seven new complaints coming into his office every day.

"We're talking about adults with developmental delays who are in crisis," said Mr. Marin in a media interview with Charles Adler on February 20. "It's extremely difficult for these parents to cope in these situations."

Complaints range from the lack of planning and funding for

children once they turn 18, lengthy delays, poor coordination of care through agencies contracted by the Ministry, and being deemed ineligible or being refused support services because of a child's high needs and challenging behaviours.

The investigation will focus on two issues: whether the Ministry is adequately responding to urgent situations involving adults with developmental disabilities; and whether it is doing enough to coordinate, monitor and facilitate access to services for them. "It's about timely response to crisis situations. It's about making sure people who need help are not left without supports or homes," Mr. Marin noted.

"We're starting with a blank sheet of paper as far as our recommendations go," he said. The report will be drafted by this summer. •

Parents' Joint Advisory Group holds education session

The first of a series of planned family education sessions was held on February 28, 2013, at OCTC's Thurston site. The sessions were sponsored by the parents' Joint Advisory Group (JAG) from OCTC, Roger's House and Rotary Home. Approximately 20 people participated in person while others joined via teleconference.

Three speakers gave presentations. The first speaker was Tom Sparks, who gave a parent's perspective on the transition process. In addition to drawing on his own family's journey through the process, he offered practical strategies that families can use to help them make it easier for their youth to transition into adult services.

Ginette Desmarais, Program Supervisor, Ministry of Community and Social Services, described how the ministries of Children and Youth Services, Community and Social Services, and Education are working together to develop a single integrated transition plan and point of access to government services and supports for young people with developmental disabilities.

The third speaker, Kerry-Anne St. Jean, a registered nurse with OCTC, gave the perspective of the health care provider. Her presentation focused on the planning that goes into shifting adolescents and young adults with chronic physical and medical conditions from child-centred to adult-oriented health care services.

Comments from attendees included "interesting," "informative" and "a real eye-opener."

If you wish to learn about future educational sessions offered through JAG, you are invited to e-mail Sharon Lefroy at slefroy@octc.ca. •

What's new at www.octc.ca

Have you checked out our website recently? You'll find new videos, along with loads of other new information. For example:

- Videos – One of five videos produced during the Paralympian event on Dec. 12, 2012, is featured on our website. Stay tuned as we rotate these videos, which help to showcase our Recreational Therapy program, including the new 'Run, Wheel, Jump, Throw' initiative.
- On our home page you may notice three symbols in the top right corner. We have joined the OCTC Foundation on Facebook. We're also on Flickr, an online photo management and sharing application, and on Vimeo, a video-sharing website where users can upload, share and view videos. Share these links with your friends and families and help us increase our visibility within the community.
- Look for our web version of *Looking Ahead: Transitions From Infancy to Adulthood*. You'll find it in the family section (look for the family icon) sometime in April. We'll also have a youth-friendly version on the youth section of our site. This Q&A document is designed to help clients, families, staff and our community partners understand service delivery through six important transitions, including school entry, high school and adulthood. •



Bike and Trike Rally

OCTC's third annual Bike and Trike Rally is coming! Come on out to the Brewer Arena, 210 Hopewell Avenue, on Saturday, May 4, from 2–4 p.m. Watch for details on our website soon! •