

HEARING THE VOICES OF CHILDREN

THE TERESA GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 11/12



The Teresa Group

A close-up, high-resolution portrait of a young child with curly brown hair and green eyes. The child's face is the central focus, with a slight smile and a look of hope. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

THE TERESA GROUP MISSION

**The Teresa Group
advances the dignity and
well-being of children and
their families affected
by HIV and AIDS.**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

AS WE MARK THE 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF

The Teresa Group, we are cognizant of the fact that for the most part, children remain the 'missing face' of AIDS.

Even though HIV/AIDS has been around for some 30 years, little has changed with regard to the stigma and discrimination associated with the disease. The statistics surrounding children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS are bleak. They tell us that children with HIV/AIDS in their families are among the poorest, most marginalized and least served populations on the globe today.

But here in Toronto, The Teresa Group offers a safe haven for hundreds of children and families battling this disease. Here there is always hope, respect and compassion for everyone that comes through our doors. Here is a place for quiet conversations, tears, laughter, hugs, moments of joy and new friendships. For many, it is the only place where clients can talk openly about how HIV has impacted their lives.

The Teresa Group has been such a comfort to me and my children. We come from a country where we were treated terribly because we were an 'AIDS' family. It has taken a long time to be able to trust again. This is the only place where we can talk openly about our situation. Now my children feel wanted, nurtured and comforted. They are no longer ashamed of who they are. They know there are other good families just like us" (mother)

The Teresa Group is one of only a handful in North America providing specialized programs and services to this highly marginalized population. On an annual basis, our amazing staff work with approximately 780 children and youth and 380 families. Our mission is to "advance the dignity and well-being of children and their families affected by HIV and AIDS"; and we take it seriously. With a small group of highly trained staff and a team of volunteers; we have developed an range of comprehensive, client focused programs and services that have set a benchmark for excellence locally and internationally.

Our successes over the past year have been many – a seamless move to beautiful new space, the final part of an independent evaluation of the Prenatal Program, an evaluation of The Leap for Success Tutor/ Mentor Program and finally an evaluation and an international presentation of a group therapy program for youth living with HIV/AIDS that Teresa Group counsellors have been offering at Sick Kids Hospital over the past 2 years. In addition, we've rounded out our programming with the addition of a new Toddler Group and a monthly Parenting Group.

Over the past year the board has begun to implement strategies developed in the previous year in a number of key areas, including governance, human resources and donor stewardship. The Board is keenly aware that these strategies are not ends in and of themselves. They have been developed and

implemented with the full knowledge that their purpose is to support the Teresa Group's mission.

It is hard to believe that in addition to our ongoing local programming, The Teresa Group has taken on the logistics of organizing a 4th international symposium on Children and HIV/AIDS which is scheduled to happen next month in Washington, DC. Planning is proceeding at a feverish pace as the finishing touches are put in place for this important international event which already has close to 500 people registered. **The Children and HIV/AIDS, Closing the Gap: Ending Vertical Transmission through Community Action Symposium** will examine how a wide range of community based responses can contribute to the successful scale-up of effective PMTCT programmes on a global level. We have partnered with the Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS and the Global Fund for Children along with 15 international funders to make this our most successful symposium ever.

We are ever grateful to our many, many funders who, despite a challenging economic climate, have seen the wisdom in continuing to support our groundbreaking work of compassion. **Our work simply would not be possible without the collective support of hundreds of corporate and individual donors, foundations, churches, community organizations and government funders, many of whom have been supporting us for years.** We are especially grateful to our special event organizers, donors and volunteers who have made the Toy Auction, Mane Event, Charity Challenge and most recently, Bingo Palooza such spectacular fundraising events.

As always, we extend a very special thank you to the amazing staff of The Teresa Group whose compassion and expert knowledge have allowed us to create such innovative programming for the clients we serve. Finally, this Annual Meeting is a bittersweet one for the Teresa Group. While we celebrate all of the achievements of the organization over the past year, we do so with the realization that this will be the last Annual Meeting attended by Karen Vance-Wallace, in her capacity as our Executive Director. Words (especially in the confined space of this introduction) cannot begin to describe what Karen has meant to and accomplished for the Teresa Group and its clients since she entered the doors as Executive Director that fateful day in January, 2001. In a vain attempt to do so, I wish to extend a deep and heartfelt thanks to you Karen on behalf of the Teresa Group's board, staff, volunteers and, most importantly, its clients, as you transition from ED to "super volunteer".



Matthew Swarney
President

OUR PROGRAMS

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Economically tough times combined with the complex issues of poverty, stigma and isolation have significantly impacted the children and families who visit The Teresa Group. The agency is currently serving hundreds of local children and families affected by HIV and AIDS, and it is encouraging to know that in some small way our Family Support Program alleviates a bit of the burden created by the social determinants of health. Throughout the year families come in to access practical support items such as Kids' Lunch Packs, new and gently used clothing, TTC tokens, diapers, and as well they each receive a brand new diaper bag full of baby items. We also have back to school supplies in a new backpack and warm hats and mitts for children when the cold weather comes. Our families say they feel safe when visiting our office and often drop by just for a visit and a chat with staff.

“I didn't know that there were people in this world who would welcome me without judgement and with such kindness. I feel so relieved to have come here today.”

DIRECT COUNSELING SERVICES

Living with or being affected by HIV and AIDS can be very hard for children and families to cope with. It is often difficult for families to discuss the complexities of their situation due to fear, stigma, and discrimination. Staff at The Teresa Group offer counseling services in a safe and supportive environment either in person or over the phone. When it comes to HIV issues such as disclosure, grief and loss, future care planning or parent-child relationships, there is always a trained counselor available to listen and help.

“It's not easy talking about what hurts you, sharing your story, but knowing they won't judge me helps”.

NEW MOMS GROUP

The first year of a new baby's life is a happy but challenging time for first time mothers and even for moms going through it a second or third time. It is often one of the biggest learning curves of a woman's life. In addition to the common challenges experienced by all moms, new moms with HIV are also coping with their health condition, medications for themselves and their baby, and worries about bonding in the absence of breastfeeding. The support systems they generally rely on in times of difficulty may not be available to them due to the stigma surrounding HIV. This is where the New Moms Group can help. Twice a month moms and their babies fill the programming room with cooing, laughter and friendship. It is often one of the only places moms can talk openly about parenting with HIV during the first year of their child's life. The activities are designed to engage, teach and stimulate as new moms and their babies get to know one another in their first year together.

“The mom's group changed my life. Before I was alone and scared to come, but when I finally did come to the group, I was not alone anymore. I laughed and made friends.”

OUR PROGRAMS

FORMULA PROGRAM

Now in its 16th year, The Formula Program is an amazingly successful example of a long-term partnership between government and the community. It is still proving to be an excellent and cost-effective prevention program for mothers who are HIV positive. Fully-funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, AIDS Bureau and administered by The Teresa Group, the program supplies infant formula free of charge to HIV positive new mothers living anywhere in Ontario. Combined with proper prenatal care and safe birthing techniques it has resulted in the reduction of mother to child transmission to negligible levels.

“People don’t understand. They think that breastfeeding my baby will give her the best start, but I am giving her the best possible start by feeding her baby formula. I wouldn’t be able to help my baby without your help. Now I feel happy knowing that she is getting the best start in life that I can possibly give her.”

PRENATAL GROUP

Pregnancy is usually a very exciting time in a woman’s life. Being pregnant and HIV positive however often changes that excitement into fear and can cause a great deal of anxiety. Suddenly there are many questions looming such as “will my baby be okay?” and “what can I tell people when they see I am not breast feeding?” The Prenatal Group provides women who are HIV positive with support and education during this difficult time. During sessions presented by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals from St. Michael’s, Sunnybrook and Women’s College Hospital, The Hospital for Sick Children, and Mount Sinai, women learn about what to expect during their pregnancy and delivery, medication, privacy and disclosure, as well as post-partum care and testing for the baby. The soon to be moms also have the opportunity to connect with other women in a safe and caring environment, often taking those bonds into the New Moms Group after the babies are born

“After the prenatal group, I learned to take care of myself and my baby, to know about the delivery and to know there are people who will open their hands at any time to welcome and talk to you.”

OUR PROGRAMS

LEADING THE WAY

The Teresa Group has a toddler group ready to welcome young ones who are learning to walk, run and navigate their way around sofas and chairs. Once a month moms and their busy toddlers join together to play, sing, and talk. Laughter and squeals can be heard coming from the program room where the toddlers engage in activities related to the development of speech, fine and gross motor skills and social skill development. The children are able to play and practice new skills, while the moms have a chance to connect with others who are coping with similar challenges related to living with HIV while facing the complexities of parenting.

“It has been so nice to have a place to bring my young child, where they understand who I am and also care about my child.”

LEADING THE WAY

Who knew that Saturday mornings could be fun, support and educational, and that teenagers would get out of bed on a weekend to attend our Leading the Way Program? There must be a reason, and as the parent of one group member stated:

“My son can’t wait to come every Saturday!”

Leading the Way continues to offer therapeutic group programs to children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS between the ages of 5 and 18. Two nine-week sessions per year (one in the spring and one in the fall) are provided. The sessions are based on a participatory peer support model and are facilitated by professional counselors. The children and youth who participate in the Saturday morning support groups are dealing with major challenges, and in most cases, big secrets. Through discussion, play, art, theatre and recreational activities these youngsters find friends, support, expert guidance, and a forum for safe discussion. Why do the kids come? Because Leading the Way is the one place where they can talk openly, ask questions, and get information about HIV and AIDS (and have fun...)”

“I used to feel that I was all alone...now I don’t.”

THE TUTORING PROGRAM

Living in a family affected by HIV and AIDS has an impact on many children’s ability to succeed in school. Distracted by thoughts of what might be going on at home and worrying about a parent may compromise their ability to focus and function at school. The Tutoring Program helps fill this need for academic support. Dedicated and caring volunteer tutors and teacher candidates from York University’s Faculty of Education Concurrent Program work with students every week in two locations. Not only do students have the opportunity to practice their new academic skills in a safe space, but they also gain in their confidence and self-worth, believing they can achieve great things academically and in their lives!

“I actually had fun doing math for the first time ever tonight. I’m excited to go to school tomorrow to show my teacher I know how to do the math problems!” -GRADE 7 STUDENT

OUR PROGRAMS

“The group is such a welcome place to share and to talk about our children. I have learned so much about how to listen, to really hear what a child is saying and how to respond so that my child will know that I care”.

“I enjoyed interacting with the children at the Holiday Party. It warmed my heart to see how much fun they had...so special to be a part of such passion for others.”

- HOLIDAY PARTY
VOLUNTEER

PARENT'S CLUB

Parenting....probably one of the most rewarding jobs an adult can have, yet likely the only one that we receive absolutely no training for! Why didn't they tell us that these small bundles of joy grow up and actually challenge parents, often do not listen and leave us worn out at the end of the day! Yes, parenting can be hard, but for many parents living with HIV there are often additional stressors that affect their ability to raise children. These can include having numerous medical appointments, coping with the side effects of medications, being in a new country with few supports, finding housing and trying to navigate school systems. The Teresa Group's Parent Club is a place for parents to find comfort in the knowledge that there are others who understand what they are going through, particularly how living with HIV can add to the challenge of raising children. The groups are a place to learn new parenting techniques from the facilitators and from one another, to share experiences and most importantly to feel supported.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Teresa Group continues to have committed, community minded individuals who believe they can make a difference in the lives of children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS through their volunteer efforts.

Dedicated volunteers combine their love of teaching by supporting Teresa Group children and youth through the Mentor/Tutor Program. From special events, fundraising events, buddy to a child, respite for moms, to office administration, our volunteers do an exemplary job of meeting the needs of our children, youth and their families.

A heartfelt Thank You to all of those who continue to give of their time to ensure every child affected by HIV and AIDS has the same opportunities as others.

OUR PEOPLE

HONORARY CIRCLE

Penelope Holeton
Patricia MacKay C.M.
Stanley E. Reid M.D., Ph.D., FRCPC

STAFF

Wendy Firth
Office Manager
Jennifer Kindy-McPherson, BACYC
Family Support Coordinator
Constance Nobes
Volunteer Coordinator
Megan Porter, BSW
Family Support Coordinator
Maureen Ringlein, MSW
Family Support Coordinator
Liz Ryan, MSW
Family Support
Simone Shindler, MSW, RSW
Program Director
Karen Vance-Wallace
Executive Director

2011-2012

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Faizool Mohamed
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OUR CARING CONTRIBUTORS

The Teresa Group wishes to thank the hundreds of individual donors who have given so generously over the past year. In addition, we would like to thank the following:

CORPORATIONS

360 Sales Solutions
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ORGANIZATIONS

Toronto Occasional Teachers, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
International Gay Bowling Organization
OPG Employees' & Pensioners' Charity Trust
The Rotary Club of Toronto, Trump AIDS
Poker Walk
The Welcome Club Phase 1
Trillium Village Collectors Club of Ontario

FOUNDATIONS

Bayer Family Foundation
CHUM Charitable Foundation
CIBC Children's Foundation
M.A.C. AIDS Fund
MacKenzie Financial Charitable Foundation
Margaret and Daniel Ranzman Foundation
May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust
Shirley Ann & Peter Lewis Foundation
The Ganz Family Charitable Foundation
The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation
The Paloma Foundation
The William Rathbone Family Charitable Trust

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

City of Toronto, Community Services Partnerships
Human Resources Skills Development Canada
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, AIDS Bureau
Public Health Agency of Canada
Service Canada, Summer Jobs Program

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Christ Church Woodbridge, ACW
Manor Road United Church
St. Dunstons of Canterbury
St. Leonards Church, ACW

CCABA DONORS

Bernard van Leer Foundation
Children Affected by AIDS Foundation
Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Elton John AIDS Foundation
Firelight Foundation
Nelson Mandela Children's Fund
Stop AIDS Now!
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Ristorante Paese
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Starbucks Coffee
Starfish Oyster Bar and Grill
Strategic Objectives
Teach My Baby
That PR Thing
The Hazelton Hotel
Toronto Blue Jays
Toronto Raptors
Via Rail Canada Inc.
Whole Foods Market Toronto
Winners - Home Sense
Wish Restaurant

A close-up portrait of a young girl with dark skin and braided hair, smiling warmly. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid in the top left corner.

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statement

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TERESA GROUP - CHILD AND FAMILY AID

The accompanying summarized statement of operating fund revenues and expenses (the summary financial statement) is derived from the audited financial statements of The Teresa Group - Child and Family Aid ("the Agency") for the year ended March 31, 2012. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated May 29, 2012 (see below).

The summary financial statement does not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Reading the summary financial statement therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the Agency.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation of a summary of the audited financial statement in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statement based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements".

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary financial statement derived from the audited financial statements of The Teresa Group - Child and Family Aid for the year ended March 31, 2012 is a fair summary of those financial statements. However, the summary financial statement is qualified to the equivalent extent as the audited financial statements of the Agency for the year ended March 31, 2012.

The qualification of the audited financial statements is described in our qualified audit opinion in our reported dated May 29, 2012. Our qualified audit opinion is based on the fact that the Agency receives donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amount reported by the Agency and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to revenues, excess of revenues over expenses, assets and net assets. Our qualified audit opinion states that, except for the effects of the described matter, those financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Teresa Group - Child and Family Aid as at March 31, 2012 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year ended March 31, 2012 in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Toronto, Ontario
May 29, 2012

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Licensed Public Accountants

Summarized Statement of Operating Fund Revenues and Expenses Year Ended March 31, 2012

	2012			2011
	General Operations	CCABA International Coordination Projects	Total	Total
REVENUES				
Funding from Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care				
General operations	\$ 267,328	\$ -	\$ 267,328	\$ 241,141
Special projects	183,826	-	183,826	144,113
Public Health Agency of Canada	80,000	-	80,000	82,908
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada				
Summer student	2,817	-	2,817	3,944
Leap for Success	67,735	-	67,735	71,740
City of Toronto grant	26,535	-	26,535	26,535
Circle of Care funding	88,772	-	88,772	26,535
Private sector donations - cash	410,563	-	410,563	326,720
- donations-in-kind	9,994	-	9,994	21,499
CCABA international coordination projects	-	481,378	481,378	716,685
Interest	11,076	-	11,076	8,459
Amortization of capital contributions	3,079	-	3,079	2,715
Other	77,084	-	77,084	75,102
	1,228,809	481,378	1,710,187	1,721,561
EXPENSES				
General and administration	68,087	-	68,087	65,706
Communication and education	47,713	-	47,713	40,441
Family support	453,773	-	453,773	375,120
Counselling	220,124	-	220,124	201,748
Volunteer recruitment, organization and training	80,000	-	80,000	82,908
Summer student	3,256	-	3,256	4,563
Board expenses	1,722	-	1,722	1,702
Amortization of capital assets	15,134	-	15,134	11,323
Fundraising	113,848	-	113,848	89,366
Donated goods	9,994	-	9,994	21,499
Let's Talk Program	-	-	-	22
Scholarships	8,023	-	8,023	9,827
CCABA international coordination projects	-	481,378	481,378	695,592
Tutoring project	85,745	-	85,745	86,593
Loss on foreign exchange	-	-	-	7,511
	1,107,419	481,378	1,588,797	1,693,921
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year	\$ 121,390	\$ -	\$ 121,390	\$ 27,640

THE TERESA GROUP

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Imagine
Canada  Ethical Code



The Teresa Group