



The Teresa Group

Hearing the Voices of Children...

The Teresa Group
Annual Report 09/10



The Teresa Group Mission

Hearing the voices of children and families affected by HIV and AIDS, The Teresa Group provides practical assistance and emotional support through professional staff and trained volunteers. We work in close association with the HIV and AIDS Comprehensive Care Team at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto and other community agencies. The Teresa Group provides leadership through example, information and innovation.

President's Address

This past year has certainly had its challenges with the economic roller coaster ride we were on but I am happy to say that we rode the loops and twists and came to stop in good stead. Because we have always been fiscally responsible, The Teresa Group has been able to maintain all its ongoing programming as well as new initiatives introduced in 2008 such as the scholarship program which has been a huge success.

Our success is largely due to the budget conscious awareness of the staff of The Teresa Group who always ensure that any spending decisions made always have the end user, our clients in mind. Fundraising is never an easy task but this year was particularly challenging for Karen Vance-Wallace, our Executive Director. However, after months of nail biting and hard work she came through with flying colours. I would like to thank her and Wendy Firth our Office manager for their due diligence as keepers of the books. I would also like to thank our Treasurer, Dan Bales-Kogen and the Board of Directors for supporting Karen and Wendy through this very tough year.

Perhaps our biggest success story this year is the tutoring program that we run with volunteers and York University student teachers every Wednesday evening. This extremely important initiative evolved out of discussions with parents who identified the need for extra help for children who were falling behind in school. The program is rekindling children's desire to learn and work toward a brighter educational future. It is also assisting parents who may have difficulty navigating our school system. Thanks to the Tutoring Program, we have many kids who now enjoy doing their homework and are improving both their school attendance and their grades. This program is yet another example of The Teresa Group following its mission of "hearing the voices of children" and responding with innovative programming.

Our success would simply not be possible without a virtual army of volunteers and donors who have been instrumental in helping us achieve our goals. My sincere thanks go out to Joanne Baker, Steve Morris, Don Cameron and the amazing Toy Auction Committee who organized another successful fundrais-

ing event for us this past year and who are already hard at work planning for 2010. We have no better ambassador than Steve Roy who continues to sing our praises and raise funds for us each year with The Mane Event, his annual hair cutting extravaganza. It doesn't hurt either that he never fails to mention us to everyone he meets and how proud he is to be associated with us in such a positive way. I would also like to extend a special thank you to John Broley and the Geoffrey Woods Foundation and CIBC World Markets Children's Foundation who never fail to extend a helping hand when we need it. Your encouragement is monumental in keeping us strong.

On a more personal note I would like to thank everyone at The Teresa Group for all of their support during my Presidency these past 10 years. Sadly I will be leaving the board in June. When I first came to this volunteer position I had no idea of how it would affect me personally or where this journey would take me. I have met a lot of really wonderful people over the years who have enriched my life in ways I could not have imagined. There were many challenges in the beginning and I can't express my appreciation more to the staff and volunteers who have given me so much support during my tenure. Lastly, I wish the new President the best of luck in this position. I can only say that this is an ever evolving group of wonderful people who will make your term as President one of the most memorable of your life.

Sincerely,



Robert Lamont

Our Programs

Family Support Program

Last year was an exceptionally difficult year financially for many people; and more so for those affected by HIV and AIDS and dealing with the complex issues of poverty, stigma and isolation. The Teresa Group is currently serving over 390 families and 770 children and it is encouraging to know that in some small way our Family Support Program lessens the burden of living with HIV and AIDS. Throughout the year families come in to access practical support items such as Kids' Lunch Packs, new and gently used clothing, TTC tokens and diapers. Baby formula is provided to moms for the first year of their baby's life, and as well they each receive a brand new diaper bag full of baby items. We also have back to school supplies in a brand 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.

“Whenever I feel down I know that I can call and let you know about it. It makes me feel better.”

Prenatal Group

For most women, finding out that they are expecting is a very exciting time. However for some women this excitement is dampened when they learn that they are HIV positive. Feelings of joy often change into fear, guilt and shame. The Teresa Group's Prenatal Group provides pregnant women who are HIV positive with support and education that allows them to find the answers to these questions and to feel more prepared for the journey they are about to embark upon. The information is presented by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals from several hospital clinics including St. Michael's, Sunnybrook and Women's College, Mount Sinai and Sick Kids. During the group sessions the women learn what to expect during their pregnancy and delivery, and receive information about medications that may be needed. Topics such as disclosure and testing after baby comes home are also discussed.

The group provides an opportunity for the women to connect with one another in a safe and warm environment. The moms say that they enjoy being able to meet and learn from each other:

“I feel supported, comfortable, and I also learn something new each time I come.”

Bringing in community partners to speak in the groups has strengthened the relationship between the moms, their babies and other professionals:

“I love coming to connect with these women. Often times, clinics are so rushed, and these prenatal groups not only give us as professionals time to be present with our patients, but also our bond is strengthened because I am spending more time with them in a different environment.”

New Moms Group

Mothering for the first time, or even the second or third time, brings many happy but challenging moments. 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, among other things. 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 at The Teresa 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.

“We learn that every mom has different ways of bonding with their baby and of coping with their HIV. We learn from the leaders and from each other.”

“I can't say enough...you have helped me through the toughest time in my life. I am so proud to be part of this agency. I tell everyone how much you helped me. Now I can begin to live my life again.”

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.

Formula Program

Now in its 14th year The Formula Program has been an amazingly successful example of a long 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.

“I was in the pharmacy the other day and noticed how much baby formula is. I had no idea. I would never be able to afford to feed my baby without the help of The Teresa Group.”

Our Programs

Leading the Way

Leading the Way Program is a group therapy program supporting 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 counselor in training program has allowed older youth to continue getting support while gaining valuable employment skills.

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. Leading the Way is the one place where they can talk openly, ask questions, and get information about HIV and AIDS.

“We are a family. We support one another and take care of each other. The group has shown us how to do that and how to be hopeful and positive about the future.”

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 compromises their ability to focus and function at school. The Tutoring Program fills this need for academic support.

This year the Tutoring Program has expanded its reach, now serving more children than ever. Due to increasing demand, an exciting second program location was formed, that serves children in the community in which they live. The partnership with York University’s Faculty of Education Concurrent Program continues to provide enthusiastic teacher candidates, and this year the number of dedicated volunteer tutors has tripled. The incredible commitment of the volunteers and teacher candidates allows for this program to continue to meet the needs of the students.

The success of the Tutoring Program is evident when you walk into the room; students who struggled to complete homework at the beginning of the year are now seen diligently working on math problems, volunteering to reading aloud, and talking to their tutors about their academic goals. One grade 7 student summed up his new attitude towards his academic future best:

“I want to build a better me.”

Parents and tutors also agree that the program leads to positive results for the students involved:

“The tutoring program has helped build her self-confidence. As she is getting more and more confident her grades are improving - she knows that she can do the work and that she can pass her courses. She was in LEAP (a special program for students learning English as a second language), now she is in a regular math class. Because of this tutoring program she can go to a regular class and do the work. – Parent of a grade 7 student

“At the beginning of the year, he never wanted to do his math homework. Because of the tutoring program he loves doing math now!” – Tutor of a grade 3 student

Parent's Club

Parenting can be a difficult job at the best of times. Parents who are HIV positive often cope not only with raising children, but with the extra burden of managing medical appointments, side effects of medication and often living on very restricted incomes. One of the many goals of these groups is to work with parents around their feelings related to HIV and how this impacts parenting, and to provide some ideas and tools that will assist both them and their children as they grow together as a family.

One technique that is discussed is the use of positive parenting. Parents are given opportunities to practice the techniques while in the group and are encouraged to try the techniques at home with their children.

"I found that I was saying "no" way too much. In the group, we have talked about other ways to say no, without saying no. It works, the kids were not upset, and I felt great."

Volunteer Program

The tides of volunteering are changing! Fewer Canadians are volunteering and The Teresa Group continues to adapt to the challenge of the increasing demand for volunteer services. Due to the reliable, compassionate volunteers that are committed to The Teresa Group we are fortunate to "ride the wave of change".

Thank you to all the outstanding Teresa Group volunteers who donate their time, energy and skills to our children and youth through the Tutoring Program, Childcare, Respite, Special Events, Office Administration, Fundraising and the Board of Directors. Your support truly has a positive impact on our children and youth.

"It is a pleasure to be a small part of this amazing group!"

– Teresa Group Volunteer

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

Simone Shindler

MSW, RSW, Program Director

Karen Vance-Wallace

Executive Director

2009-2010

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Jacinta Cooper

Leading the Way Facilitators

Ilana David, MSW, RSW

Sarah M. Waldman, MA

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:

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and Norwegian Ministry of
Foreign Affairs
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The Teresa Group / Child And Family Aid / Auditors' Report

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

The accompanying summarized statement of operations is derived from the complete financial statements of The Teresa Group Child and Family Aid as at and for the year ended March 31, 2010. In our auditors' report on the complete financial statements, dated April 23, 2010 we expressed a qualified opinion because we were unable to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of revenue from donations. The fair summarization of the statement of operations is the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, is to report on the summarized statement of operations.

In our opinion, the accompanying statement of operations fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

This summarized statement of operations does not contain all disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that this statement may be not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the Organization's financial position, results of operations and cash flows, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

Toronto, Ontario April 23, 2010
Clarke Henning LLP, Chartered Accountants

The Teresa Group / Child & Family Aid / Summarized Statement Of Operations / Year Ended March 31, 2010

	2010			2009
	General Operations	International Symposium Projects	Total	Total
REVENUES				
Funding from Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care				
General operations	\$ 215,154	\$ -	\$ 215,154	\$195,854
Special projects	150,000	-	150,000	161,500
Health Canada - family support	82,000	-	82,000	103,894
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada				
Summer student	3,999	-	3,999	3,503
Leap for Success	31,602	-	31,602	-
City of Toronto grant	26,010	-	26,010	25,500
Private sector donations - cash	386,063	-	386,063	469,310
donations in kind	15,326	-	15,326	20,522
International symposium	-	33,715	33,715	504,774
International coordination project CCABA	-	312,470	312,470	135,233
Interest	7,464	-	7,464	16,655
Amortization of capital contributions	2,715	-	2,715	2,715
Other	55,368	-	55,368	47,164
	975,701	346,185	1,321,886	1,686,624
EXPENSES				
General and administration	69,585	-	69,585	70,409
Communication and education	39,010	-	39,010	42,100
Family support	420,592	-	420,592	425,895
Counselling	188,564	-	188,564	188,272
Volunteer recruitment, organization and training	82,000	-	82,000	103,638
Summer student	5,029	-	5,029	4,263
Board expenses	1,602	-	1,602	1,815
Amortization of capital assets	11,813	-	11,813	10,262
Fund raising	76,108	-	76,108	89,315
Donated goods	15,326	-	15,326	20,522
Let's Talk Program	206	-	206	14,779
Scholarships	10,000	-	10,000	-
International symposium	-	33,715	33,715	442,840
International coordination project CCABA	-	312,470	312,470	161,221
Tutoring project	55,718	-	55,718	25,286
Loss on foreign exchange	-	49,528	49,528	-
	975,553	395,713	1,371,266	1,600,617
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year	\$ 148	\$ (49,528)	\$ (49,380)	\$ 86,007



The Teresa Group

124 Merton Street, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario Canada M4S 2Z2

T 416.596.7703 **F** 416.596.7910
E info@teresagroup.ca

www.teresagroup.ca