

Leadership Briefing



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COUNCIL

prevention education treatment

We continue our leadership briefings this month with a look at local statistics about child abuse in Hamilton and an overview of best practices in the field of child abuse treatment. We also provide a campaign update and feedback from our

successful Grand Opening event on June 24th. More than 65 guests were on hand for the official opening of our new site and the launch of our **"It's About Time"** public campaign. Our sincere thanks to the many attendees, donors and volunteers who made the event such a success.

As part of our ongoing strategy to engage Hamiltonians in responding to child abuse, we are planning for a community dialogue facilitated by local leaders later this year (part of our **Leaders for Kids** initiative). Watch for more details about that event and other upcoming activities and check our website periodically for updates.

This issue also includes an overview of the Community Child Abuse Council's programs in an effort to help spread an understanding of the work we do and the important role these services play in this community. For more information about our programs or services please visit our website or contact us.

OCTOBER IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

This offers a special opportunity each year to raise awareness and provide education to prevent abuse and violence in the lives of children and youth. We believe that through education and prevention **we can make a difference**. Check our web site [www.childabusecouncil.on.ca] in September for special events during Child Abuse Prevention Month.



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Dan McLean (2nd from left) joins Board members George Bakker, Rocco Gizzarelli and Dr. Anne Niec, and Executive Director Anna Allevalo, at the ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening the Council's new site.

Local Realities: Child Abuse in Hamilton



TOTAL NUMBER OF REPORTED* CHILD SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ASSAULTS

January to December 2007, and January to June 2008.

Source: Child Abuse Branch, Hamilton Police Service

	Child Sexual Assaults	Child Sexual Assaults	Child Physical Assaults	Child Physical Assaults
	2007	to June 2008	2007	to June 2008
January	12	9	17	10
February	15	8	11	9
March	11	12	13	8
April	12	21	13	7
May	16	15	10	3
June	10	7	9	4
Sub-Total	76	72	73	41
July	6		7	
August	9		4	
September	13		6	
October	16		15	
November	12		8	
December	11		10	
Total	143		123	

2006 census data shows Hamilton's population includes approximately 125,000 children 18 years and younger. We know that in Ontario, an average of 2.4% of all children experience *substantiated* abuse. In Hamilton, that average translates to 3000 local children.

* includes only those assaults on children that were reported to Hamilton Police Service during the specified time period.

Questions we're asking...

Based on the above statistics, why is it that sexual assaults appear to be exceeding physical assaults since about May of 2007? What do we know about the apparent drop in assaults during summer months? How do case statistics from local child protection agencies compare with police statistics? How should Hamilton respond? How do we help more children?

How should Hamilton respond?
 Watch for details of our upcoming *Community Dialogue on Child Abuse* and plan to be part of the discussions.



“Child and youth victims of sexual abuse are our future community leaders, our employers, our employees, parents, and volunteers, on whom the health of our community rests. Whether to invest, or not, is simply not up for debate.”

Anna Allevato, Executive Director, Community Child Abuse Council

Research Summary: BEST PRACTICES

A significant body of empirical research has developed in the child abuse treatment field over the past few years, supporting the efficacy of certain treatment protocols with abused children and their families. The Kauffman Best Practices Project to Help Children Heal From the Effects of Child Abuse (2004), for example, has disseminated best practices identified through systematic review and consultation across the United States. Three intervention protocols are highlighted from the project's findings - Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT), Abuse Focused – CBT (AF-CBT), and Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). While not the only evidence-based treatments, these along with Trauma Informed-CBT, have the greatest level of theoretical, clinical and empirical support and the greatest degree of consensus support among experts in the field.

These theoretical frameworks have been found to be associated with positive outcomes for children and youth who have been sexually victimized, resulting in quantitative and qualitative improvements in their lives and the lives of their families. Through participation in therapy, they learn new skills and enhance their understanding about abuse which allows them to gain mastery over their experience. For example, through cognitive behavioural therapy, children learn to appropriately assign responsibility and assess the safety in situations. Through body-oriented techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, or focusing, a child learns to repair disruptions/disturbances in their ability to regulate affect/emotions. Learning these skills can help children and youth regain a sense of control over their lives. Parents and caregivers learn how to protect their children through the development of healthy communication styles, learning how to better understand the dynamics surrounding child sexual abuse, and how to support their children to resume healthy development.



The provision of the best possible interventions to traumatized children is a professional value that few would disavow. The efficacious and compassionate healing of the trauma for these children is a worthy goal towards which we must strive as professionals."

Kauffman Best Practices
Project, 2004

Assessment

Of primary importance to the treatment process is the assessment. The Child Physical and Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for Treatment (2003) states *"The assessment is the cornerstone of the treatment process. Without accurate, comprehensive, and sophisticated assessment, followed by reasonable treatment planning, interventions are likely to be misguided and ultimately ineffective."* These Guidelines also stress the need for the assessment to be abuse-informed and not only abuse specific, underscoring the importance of a holistic approach in the assessment of a child or youth which considers all aspects of a child's functioning in order to best determine not only the impact of the sexual abuse but also the child's strengths and potential resiliency factors. Research further supports the importance of evaluating the child and his/her experiences in the context of his/her family. The involvement, therefore, of family members including parents/caregivers, and where appropriate, siblings and the assessment of relationships within the family is a critical part of the assessment. In addition, use of standardized measures is considered an essential part of any comprehensive clinical assessment process.

It is widely acknowledged throughout the clinical and research literature that the sexual victimization of children may generate a very specific form of trauma, the effects of which demand extensive and highly specialized expertise and skills, as well as treatment modalities. Even among services specifically dedicated to the treatment of children and youth, the consensus is that the treatment of childhood sexual abuse is a sub-specialty that demands very specific training, skills and treatment modalities.

Our Programs & Services At-A-Glance



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RESOURCES

The Courage Collection

Provided in partnership with the Hamilton Public Library, a specialized collection of resource materials for children, youth, parents/caregivers and professional on topics related to child abuse and trauma, self-help, healing and adult survivor of sexual abuse issues. Free of charge to individuals and families in Ontario.

The Diary Play

A theatrical presentation, performed by students, focusing on strategies to prevent bullying. Includes a teacher's curriculum.

"Touching" - Parent's Kit and Touching Teacher's Kit

An award winning school-based educational program aimed at keeping children safe from abuse. Components include the Touching video, Parent's Kit, and Teacher's Kit with curriculum to be used with the video.

ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT SERVICES

Child and Youth Trauma Services (CYTS)

Comprehensive assessment and treatment for

- children and youth up to age 18 who have been sexually victimized
- children under age 12 who have sexually victimized other children
- children under 12 within a family who have engaged in sibling sexual abuse

Assessment includes: intake, clinical interviews, psychometric evaluation, review of relevant reports, and feedback session with the family to review findings and discuss recommendations. Treatment is individualized based on the assessment recommendations. In addition to symptom reduction and resolution of the traumatic experience, treatment may address other disruptions in the child's functioning. Approaches to treatment may involve psychoeducational, cognitive behavioural, experiential, family therapy, play therapy, which is dependent upon the emotional, psychological, and cognitive abilities of the child or youth.

Children's Mental Health Outreach Program (CMHOP)

Mental health counselling for immigrant and refugee children and their families that also includes trauma related assessment and treatment. Provided in partnership with SISO and Centre de Sante.

Parent Support Group

New in 2008. Psychoeducational and support *group program* for vulnerable and at risk families, specifically for non-offending parents/caregivers whose child has been sexually victimized; and a second group for parents and caregivers of children ages 12 and under who have engaged in sexualized behaviours. These groups aim to enhance understanding of the impact of abuse as well as strengthen parenting skills and parent-child relationships.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Internship Training Program

New for 2009, an advanced training institute, taught by experts in the field, and combining theory and direct practice in the area of child sexual victimization. Focus is on comprehensive trauma and abuse assessments and treatment in this highly specialized area of practice. Application process.

For more information or to request a service please call Janice at 905-523-1020 ext. 12.

For informative links, resources and updates about our work please visit our web site:

www.childabusecouncil.on.ca

Leaders For Kids

The ***Leaders for Kids*** initiative is an important part of our strategic plan for community engagement and education. Our ***Leadership Briefings*** are issued regularly and designed to help leaders from across the Hamilton area share an understanding of the complex issues surrounding child abuse and the challenges and opportunities facing our community in this area. Only with this shared understanding can we truly engage community stakeholders in a meaningful, constructive and absolutely essential dialogue about how Hamilton can and should address the horrific problem of child abuse. ***Leaders For Kids*** is a vehicle designed to link and support leadership efforts across Hamilton. Readers are encouraged to visit our web site for updates and resources, and to contribute in a variety of ways. Together we can craft solutions to this devastating and far-reaching issue. Our plans include a leader-facilitated community dialogue on child abuse later this year, but you can help now by sharing your expertise or resources – let us know how you'd like to be involved. Call us. Become a ***Leader for Kids*** and make a difference today.

“Just as stopping smoking is the most cost effective and humane way to deal with lung cancer, stopping child maltreatment is the most cost effective and humane way to create a more healthy, peaceful and productive culture. Dealing with childhood trauma (i.e. preventing it or at least ameliorating its effects as soon as possible) is a powerful leverage point for the transformation of society. There are three levels at which to address this problem: 1) preventing the abuse; 2) help for those who were abused; and 3) containing the effects of abuse. Currently, the vast majority of society’s efforts emphasize the third category...we need to reverse these priorities.”

Franey, K., Geffner, R., Falconer, R. (eds.), 2001.



Every time you treat a child with respect they stand a little taller.

Family Service Canada



Dan McLean, a *Leader for Kids*, kicks off the Council’s new public campaign at our Grand Opening event on June 24th.

“My hope for the new millennium is that society comes to see child maltreatment as a ‘public health epidemic’ and responds by making scientific investigation in this area a priority. If we hope to improve the lives of children in the future, it is vital that we enter the 21st century with our eyes wide open about the need to reduce the burden of suffering associated with child maltreatment.”

Dr. Harriett MacMillan, Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, Oct. 2000



Campaign Update



Brian Melo, Honourary Campaign Chair, at the Council's Grand Opening and Campaign Launch in June.

The Community Child Abuse Council is on a mission to enhance its efforts in community relations, education and prevention. Our goal is to find ways to get the message out, to get people involved, and to expand our services – ***we simply must be able to help more children.*** First, we developed a strategic plan for community engagement that will guide and focus our efforts over the next two years. Then we set to work on crafting a campaign that would be the centerpiece of that strategy. We wanted something engaging, and yet simple. The ***"It's About Time"*** campaign was launched in June and is designed to educate and engage Hamiltonians about the urgent need for this community to respond to the "burden of suffering" associated with child abuse. Brian Melo, Honourary Campaign Chair, helped to kick off the campaign and told attendees at the launch event, "I can't personally know what these children are experiencing, but I know we can make a difference and that's why I'm here". Our Community Dialogue on Child Abuse planned for later this year is one step toward making that difference. Check our web site for information about the ***"It's About Time"*** campaign and the Community Dialogue on Child Abuse.

COMMUNITY CHILD ABUSE COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2008
4:00 p.m.
500 JAMES ST. N., SUITE 205

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