



Our newly refreshed logo

# The Voice of the Children

November 2011

## In this issue

A message from the  
CEO & Society and  
Foundation Presidents  
*Page 2*

---

Celebrating our Talents  
Youth Making a Difference  
*Page 3*

---

I Am Your Children's Aid  
Awareness Campaign  
*Page 4*

---

Volunteer  
Homework Program  
*Page 6*

---

Community Support  
*Page 7*

---

Holiday Program  
*Back Cover*

## Putting our best faces forward

Welcome to the Voice of the Children. This communicate has a unified message of pride. First and foremost, the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society takes great pride in celebrating the achievements and successes of its children, youth, and families.

We are showcasing the faces and success stories of those that are our very own. This Campaign is a means of linking with our community. In turn, we hope that you will find a way to connect with us. Take some time to review the stories and ads that are contained



We realize that in many cases, every step along the way can be a milestone, something that many of us who consider ourselves fortunate take for granted. We also celebrate the care and nurture expressed by our staff, foster parents and volunteers. These special people make a difference in the lives of others.

As we launch the "I Am Your Children's Aid, Windsor-Essex" campaign, we are expressing how proud we are to be a vital part of a community that is as caring as ours.

in this magazine. Perhaps there is something specific that captures your attention. As well, we welcome your ideas and suggestions by phone at 519-252-1171 or by contacting [www.wecas.org](http://www.wecas.org).

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society & Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation – reaching out to Our Children, Our Future!

"I Am A Success Story.  
I Am Your Children's Aid."  
Windsor-Essex

COREY  
Child & Youth  
Worker



# A Message From The Chief Executive Officer and the Society and Foundation Board Presidents



Bill Bevan



Shane Renaud



Holly Burt

In the coming weeks, you will no doubt notice that the Children's Aid is a viable support for children and families of Windsor-Essex County. The "I Am Your Children's Aid, Windsor-Essex" campaign is coming to a banner, billboard, newspaper, magazine and event near you. Modeled from the successful Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) provincial campaign, the local initiative highlights six success stories. These are individuals, men, women and youth who grew up with some form of support from the Children's Aid. They have all achieved in their own right whether it be in terms of family, education or career.

Why are we so excited about this? The time is right to spread the good news about who we are. For over 111 years, the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society has been an essential community service striving to protect and defend the most vulnerable segment of our population, our children and youth. We also promote and encourage the essence of family. Unfortunately, very few know of the countless "good news" stories that arise from graduations, adoptions, exhibits of talent and commitment to others from those young people who grew up in our care. This is Phase One. In the months ahead, we will expand this program by introducing you to many of our unsung heroes as well: staff, foster parents and volunteers. There are many stories to tell. They will bring out an array of emotions, as any good book does. As you view the pages you too will be enlightened and in many cases heartened by the good news that is happening right here in Windsor-Essex County.

If you wish to join the growing chorus of, "I Am Your Children's Aid, Windsor-Essex", consider giving some time to assist a child with homework, volunteer to drive, open your home to others by becoming a foster parent or simply make a donation to the Holiday Program, Fresh Air Summer Camp Program or one of the other worthy initiatives supported by the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation.

We are proud to be such a vital entity of this community that we call home. More importantly, we are privileged to be who we are in terms of nurturing our community's most valuable resource. We are YOUR Children's Aid!!

Bill Bevan  
Chief Executive Officer  
Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society

Holly Burt  
President  
Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation  
Board of Directors

Shane Renaud  
President  
Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society  
Board of Directors



# MUSIC PROGRAM

The music program at the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society aims to provide an opportunity for youth to express themselves in a fun and constructive manner. Music is a medium that youth can relate to. It provides positive reinforcement of one's capabilities by facilitating new opportunities for personal growth and for positive emotional expression. The main goal of the music program is to increase self esteem and self worth. The youth

involved in the program grow through music in individual and group settings. Approximately 50 youth in care have been involved in the music program between September 2010 and October 2011. Children involved in the program range from 2-17 years of age.

The music program provides opportunities for these youth to perform, to write songs, and to explore different types of music. The

music program is a great way to allow the children's voices to be heard in a creative yet beneficial manner. The youth have participated in three music concerts to date including "Sing Up", "The Music in Me" and "CAS Idol". Performances have included singing, piano, and playing various rhythm instruments. Children currently involved in the music program are practicing for "A Christmas Carol", their upcoming Holiday concert.

## PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM FOR YOUTH

The Photography Program for Youth is sponsored by the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Foundation, The Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society, Henry's Cameras and through funds available from other grant sources. This program teaches the art of photography to youth between the ages of 15-21 years that are in the care or have been in the care of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society. This Photography Program for Youth uses photography to capture the imagination of our youth, to empower them, building confidence, self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

This program is facilitated by Ted Kloske, Manager of Henry's in Windsor, Ontario. With the support of Linda Goodhue, Director of Resources and Adoption and Sarah McAllister, Children's Services worker, this program

involves youth in learning and discovering the fundamentals of photography.

The youth have been provided with digital SLR camera, bag and necessary equipment as part of this program. This program involves the teaching of fundamental photography skills as well as participation in hands on learning through field trips to various locations in Windsor and Essex county. The youth will also work on individual creative projects that will allow them to apply the skills, methods and concepts learned throughout the program. Three series of programs have run since September 2010 with approximately 25 youth having participated. At the end of each program, we have celebrated their artistic work by hosting a Gallery night at the RAWMEET Gallery.



This sessions Gallery night where the youth's work will be proudly displayed will be hosted again by the RAWMEET Gallery on Thursday, November 24, 2011 from 4 to 8 pm. The RAWMEET Gallery is located at 628 Monmouth Road, Unit #6, Windsor.

## YAC (YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

YAC is comprised of youth in care between the age of 15 – 21. The Committee is dedicated to improving the lives of the youth in care through advocacy, education, and public awareness.

The Committee holds monthly meetings to: plan events for the youth in care; plan fundraisers to reach their goals; and to discuss how they can support each other.

YAC is supported with funding for: monthly meeting refreshments; monthly motivational speakers; newsletter; YAC website; bulletin board in agency to promote activities; and attendance at conferences locally or out of town.



## Youth Lead Hearings

By Dana Gajewska  
(21 years old, former crown ward)

From Wednesday, November 16th to Friday, November 18th, youth in care will be holding hearings at Queens Park, which is the home to our provincial government. The hearings are about making a stance, creating interest and giving youth the opportunity to use their voice to create awareness about issues around youth leaving care.

How does a hearing work? There is a panel of 5 people who run the hearings. The panel listens to the testimonies, or stories, of those who come to speak about the issues of youth in care. The

general public is allowed to come and sit in on the hearings to see what is going on, this includes people from the media. The ultimate goal is to have politicians attend because they are the ones who make the laws that affect youth in care.

For more information check out:  
**Youth Leaving Care Hearings on Facebook**

**ProvincialAdvocate on YouTube**

**ourvoicourturn on Twitter**

<http://provincialadvocate.on.ca/main/en/hearings/pages/home.html>

# “I AM YOUR CHILDREN’S AID WINDSOR-ESSEX” Awareness Campaign

The following six individuals have shared their stories of how the Windsor-Essex Children’s Aid Society has impacted them. We take pride in the aspirations and achievements of all our children and youth.



## SUCCESS STORY: BILL

I was the youngest of six brothers and sisters when I came into foster care. When I was three we were all adopted. Although my siblings were adopted into different foster homes we maintained a relationship and are still close today. I attribute this close connection to my siblings, and my success as an adult to the wonderful parents that adopted me. They taught me the fundamentals of life and helped me realize my full potential. I am a successful businessman and politician; but more importantly, I feel most successful as a husband and a father. I am currently the Past President of the Windsor-Essex Children’s Aid Foundation Board of Directors, and although I have a busy life, I am still committed to giving back to the organization that was there for me at such a young age.

## SUCCESS STORY: COREY

I came into foster care on my 15th birthday. I had grown up in an abusive environment and during my time in care I lived in various foster and group homes. After several months I was placed with a woman who specialized in fostering adolescent girls. This woman became like a grandmother to me. She praised me and often told me how much she was proud of me – she believed in me! This made me believe in myself and before long I was in post secondary education and being honoured with a bursary. I eventually went to live on my own but was supported by the Society until I turned 21 years of age. The CAS and my CAS worker will always remain as family in my heart.

Today I am a Child & Youth Worker, and recently with the support of my friends and student colleagues was able to create a Bursary for other youth in care. I am a mother and an advocate. I plan to further my career advocating child abuse prevention and awareness as well as advocating on behalf of CAS, showing people the greatness that comes from the agency.



## SUCCESS STORY: HELENA

Growing up in an abusive home is no way for a child to live. The scars never go away. But when you speak out and tell someone you give yourself a second chance to live. I would know I was a child abused for so many years that at the age of 15 I no longer had the desire to live. Like anyone I was scared, hurt, confused, unable to trust anyone and unsure of what would happen to me if I called the Children’s Aid Society. I didn’t know the process and how they could help but one day after a horrible night of abuse at home I went into school and knew I couldn’t live like that any longer. I didn’t have the courage to call the Children’s Aid Society myself so I decided to confide in a friend at school who did the right thing and went to the guidance counselor who took the appropriate steps and called the Children’s Aid Society. CAS provided me with the counseling, tools, love and support I needed to live a safe, healthy and happy life away from the abuse.

Today at 26 years old I am a strong, independent, successful woman. I have recently graduated from college, started my career, and conduct motivational speeches focused on speaking out about child abuse. All of this wouldn’t have been possible without the many workers, staff, volunteers and foster parents who encouraged, loved, and supported me over the years.



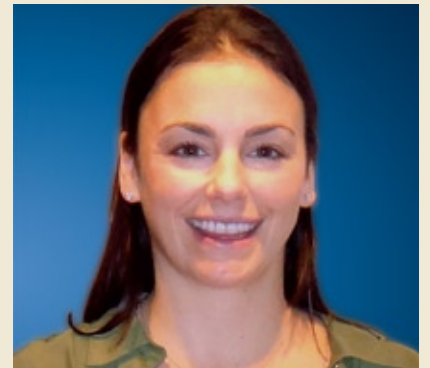


### SUCCESS STORY: JEMIMAH

My sisters and I came to Canada after leaving our homeland of Uganda and the abuse we suffered. My oldest sister was 15, my second sister was 14, and I was only 12 when we came into care. We had been in multiple homes we didn't like, so our social worker strived to find us a family where we would be most happy and secure. With hard work, she managed to find us a family that shared the same religious beliefs and whose culture was very similar to ours. I love my foster family and although I have moved out, I still visit every weekend. With the dedication and support of both my foster parents and social worker, I am now enrolled at the University of Windsor pursuing my undergrad in Social Work in hopes of getting into law school in the near future. I was once told to 'Aim for perfection and only settle for excellence,' that is still my motto today.

### SUCCESS STORY: MARY

I was adopted when I was only one month old into a loving family. They nurtured me into the person that I am today. I have an outgoing, fun-loving, and deeply caring personality. I am grateful for my parents, who have always loved me unconditionally. From a young age, I was always aware of my adoption and its process. In my early twenties, I was put into contact with my birth mother along with the help of a social worker. The contact helped fill in some unanswered questions, as well as health concerns. I know that I could not have asked for better parents arranged by the CAS. They are truly my angels. Through the Children's Aid Society, I found my true home.



### SUCCESS STORY: TOM

I was adopted through the CAS when I was seven. My adoptive family did their best to make me aware of my family of origin. I always felt as if this was my own family and never did I doubt the welcome I received from my extended family. I attribute my knowledge and skills to the support of my adoptive family. Four years after my foster parents passed away I decided that I wanted to go through the process of finding and meeting my birth parents. On my way to work at our family business, I received a call that my birth parents were alive, together and living close by. With exceptional support from the CAS and government, we were finally able to meet. I quickly learned that I had two siblings – a brother and a sister who lived right down the road from me. I also learned that I was playing hockey with my own cousins! Being from German decent, and my birth family being the host family for many of the area's German families, I also learned that many of my customers were also relatives. Needless to say, my family tree is very large and I am grateful that my own two sons can enjoy it as well!



## Volunteer Homework Program

For many children school means struggling academically and socially. We have found that many of the children we serve through the Society benefit from attending weekly tutoring sessions. To this end, the Volunteer Homework Program was developed.

This individual support has been proven to give these students the edge in improving their understanding of the schoolwork, problem solving items and developing good study habits.

The Homework Program began on November 1 and will run every Tuesday and Wednesday from 6pm – 8pm. We have 50 tutors and an equal number of students in the program.

This year we are proud to build on the good work of this program with the implementation of a Mobile Library through the Windsor Star Raise A Reader Campaign. The Society received a grant for \$3,500 to support a Mobile Library for the Volunteer Homework Program and the Family Visitation Program.



Becoming an avid reader opens a world of education and imagination that can benefit someone for a lifetime, personally and professionally. We thank The Windsor Star for its great support through Raise-a-Reader.



THE WINDSOR STAR  
windsorstar.com

**JANUARY 21, 2012**  
**9AM - 3PM**

# Windsor's 2nd Annual Indoor Garage Sale

## of the Rich & Famous

Come visit this Spectacular Public Event! Windsor's Second Winter Garage Sale - **INDOORS!** High-end, high-quality items donated by well-known local celebrities, families and respected businesses! Hurry in for a steal of a deal on furniture, appliances, sports memorabilia, home décor, gym equipment and much more!

**Great Family Fun!**

**Food & Refreshments While You Shop!**

**Sponsored By**

**Proceeds to Benefit the**

**AT ROSE CITY FORD**  
**6333 TECUMSEH ROAD EAST, WINDSOR**

## The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation presents **Gourmet Gardens**

Join us for a celebration of food, wine, & spring!

Save the date:

**May 6, 2011**

12:30pm  
Sprucewood Shores Estate Winery



November is  
**ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH**

**"Adoption As An Option"**

For more information, contact  
[useyourvoice.ca/adopt.html](http://useyourvoice.ca/adopt.html)

## Green Shield Provides Major Boost

Each summer, with the help of our donors, the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation provides the Fresh Air Summer Camp Program. In 2011, over 300 children benefited from a summer camp experience. These children are receiving services from the Society and range in age from 7-14 years. The cost to send these children to over 33 local day and residential camps was over \$80,000. Summer camp continues to be a

positive experience for children who have had significant upheaval in their lives.

This year we were fortunate to have received a Community Giving Grant of \$20,000 from Green Shield Canada to support the Summer Camp Program.



Mike Clark, Manager of Public Relations & Fund Development, WECAS, Bill Bevan, CEO, WECAS, Stephanie Bouman, Green Shield Canada, Rob Tamblin, Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation Board of Directors

## Back to School Program

Thanks to a partnership with Staples Business Depot and Monarch Basics the Society was able to provide backpacks filled with school supplies to 1033 children and youth receiving support through Family Services, those residing in foster care, and those living independently but enrolled in secondary and post secondary school.

This year the program supported 677 children in Family Services, 47 youth over the age of 18 on Extended Care & Maintenance, and 309 Children in Care for a total of 1033 children and youth!

Once again, Staples Business Depot (Leamington, Walker Rd, and Ouellette locations) sponsored the donation drive and fundraiser which provided all the school supplies needed for a successful start to school! Their fundraising efforts also helped the Society to offset the cost of back packs.

Monarch Basics was also a sponsor again this year and provided us a significant discount on the supplies purchased for back packs to children in care. This expenditure will be supported by funding through the Ontario Child Benefit

Equivalent Fund (OCBe). Monarch also held a raffle to raise funds for the program.

We anticipate that the need for this program will continue and we are equally optimistic that our sponsors and the community will continue to make this program a success.



that was easy.®



## 2011 Holiday Program

Partnering with the WSO to make children's dreams come true

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation will be accepting donations in the lobby at the Dec. 3 & 4 Family Pops Concert, "The Snowman"

### How Can You Help?

Consider;

- New Unwrapped Toys
- New Clothing Items
- Household Items
- Food Vouchers
- Cash Donations

(Also assists us in sending children/youth to summer camps)

Other opportunities include Sponsorship of a Family, or a Youth who lives independently and is attending school or work programs. Tax receipts will be issued for all donations over \$10.00.

Contact Andrea Madden, Community Initiatives Co-ordinator at (519) 252-1171, ext. 3236 for more information.



## Establishment of Bursary Marks Windsor Regiment's 75th Anniversary

To mark its 75th Anniversary, the Windsor Regiment presented the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation with a gift of \$10,000 to establish the Windsor Regiment Bursary for youth considering post-secondary education at a community college or trade school. In acknowledging this link from the past to the future, Honorary Colonel Roger Lindsay has commented, "This bursary comes in recognition of the long connection between the communities which the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid serves and the Windsor Regiment which also has so many ties to the same people".

To establish a bursary, please contact Mike Clark at 519-252-1171 ext. 3210.



Regimental Sergeant-Major, Chief Warrent Officer Vic Chiasson, Windsor Regiment Major Brian Johnson, Windsor Regiment, Bill Bevan, CEO, WECAS Holly Burt, President, Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation



# Holiday Program

## You Can Help!

- Mom has just left home because of an abusive relationship. She has two young children and she is struggling to make ends meet.
- Family has four children with 1 on a heart transplant list. Family spends a lot of time in Toronto for child requiring medical procedure and have lost time from their jobs. Really appreciative of help for the Holidays!
- Single Dad with four children. Dad works a full-time minimum wage job and struggles to provide for four children.
- Bruce is eighteen years old and has been a ward of the Society. He recently moved out on his own and is starting at the University of Windsor in January. He would be appreciative of clothing and items for his apartment.

## Consider donating...

- ★ New, Unwrapped Toys
- ★ Cash Donations
- ★ Household Items
- ★ Food Vouchers
- ★ Clothing Items

## FAMILY SPONSORSHIP

Your family sponsorship will benefit families who are experiencing a variety of difficulties and problems in their lives and who are receiving services from the Society to resolve these problems.

## INDEPENDENTLY LIVING—YOUTH FROM 16-21 YEARS

There are approximately 120 youth involved with our agency who live independently. These young people are attending school or work programs.

## OTHER INFORMATION

- We request that all gifts are new items. There are no exceptions to this request, as we believe it is important that children receive new gifts that were selected especially for them.
- **TAX RECEIPTS:** Receipts can be issued for your donations. The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation issues receipts for all **donations over \$10.00.**
- **Deadline to donate gifts is December 12, 2011**

Contact Andrea Madden, Community Initiatives Coordinator at (519) 252-1171, ext. 3236 for more information

Making children's dreams come true!  
519-252-1171 • [www.wecas.org](http://www.wecas.org)



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