



# CFS Matters!

Winter 2014

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## Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba



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**D**ear Friends,  
The long awaited Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry report (<http://www.phoenixsinclairinquiry.ca/index.html>) is comprehensive in response to the complexity of the challenges facing vulnerable children and families. It includes 62 recommendations that if implemented, will improve services to vulnerable children and families. Many of the recommendations support the continued transformation of the child welfare system that has been underway in the General Authority since 2006.

Other important recommendations focus upon addressing the underlying social and economic

conditions that are the often cited as the “root causes” of child maltreatment and neglect; parental mental health, poverty and inadequate housing. We now have an opportunity to leave a very different legacy in the name of Phoenix Sinclair, by prioritizing the recommendations that respond to the broader social and economic conditions that the Commissioner describes. Justice Hughes notes that “the social and economic conditions that render children vulnerable to abuse and neglect are well beyond the scope of the child welfare system,” and he emphasizes that “the responsibility to keep

*children safe cannot fall solely on the shoulders of the child welfare system...this is a responsibility that belongs to the entire community.”*

CFS Western continues to demonstrate its willingness and ability to work in partnership with the community to support families and to keep children safe. Our continuum of services is built upon this belief of responding to community needs around family strengthening, support and parent education. This edition of **CFS Matters** highlights this in many ways.

  
Dave McGregor, M.S.W., R.S.W.  
Chief Executive Officer

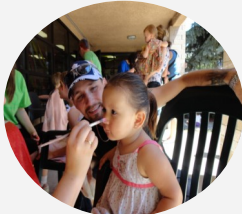
  
Ramona Coey  
President, Board of Directors

*Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba exists so that children are safe and nurtured in strong, loving families within a community of caring people.*

### Elsbeth Reid Family Resource Centre

255—9th Street  
Brandon MB R7A 6X1  
204-726-6280

Open 9 am—5 pm weekdays



### Preschool Enrichment Program

2nd Floor  
2227 Brandon Avenue  
Brandon MB R7B 0S9  
204-727-6650



### Family and Community Development Centre

Unit 4, 613—10th Street  
Brandon MB R7A 4G6  
204-726-6040



### Victoria Day Care Centre

1st Floor  
2227 Brandon Avenue  
Brandon MB R7B 0S9  
204-728-9845



# Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre by Lisa Ramsay, Coordinator

The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre is located at 255—9th Street in Brandon, telephone 204-726-6280 (or toll free 1-800-483-8980) and is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Resource Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of its many donors, including the:



and the



## *B*elated Happy New Year!

The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre was a very active place last fall. Many families came to our wide range of parenting courses, support group and parent child activities.

At the end of each course, we offer parents an opportunity to give us feedback and once again their expressions were overwhelmingly positive.

Parents note the warm and personal greeting they get upon their arrival to the Centre each week.

Parents appreciate the chance to learn about child development, enrich their communication and relationship building skills

and they always tell us they are sad to see the program end.

Parents also consistently express their respect and appreciation for our child care staff. They entrust us with their precious babies and preschoolers while they attend the program and we see the children thoroughly enjoying themselves in our enriching child care program.



Our parents share that the facilitators make them feel understood and supported in their journey through

parenthood. Groups are also valuable in that parents hear other parents sharing their stories and this results in feelings of validation,

normalization and relief.

I have the privilege of reading these evaluations and it affirms that the dedication and commitment of this staff is remarkable.

I also want to share with you that, during the past holiday season, our community was particularly kind, generous and supportive to our families. As we know, Christmas can be a joyful family time. It can also be a time of tremendous financial stress and anxiety for parents who want to give their children what we all want at Christmas.

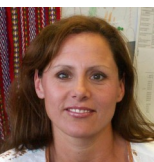
Year after year we can count on individual anonymous donors, businesses and schools to provide food and gifts for some of our families in need. The coordination of donations is a lot of work for the staff on top of their regular work duties but it is worth it. The donor's genuine expression of the spirit of



the season is matched by the level of gratitude shown by the recipient family when the delivery happens. Helping parents to be able to enjoy a full fridge and gifts under the tree for their children is a heart warming experience for all involved.

As always, my door is open. If you have questions, feedback or want to visit please give me a call. On behalf of the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre staff, I wish you a safe, healthy and happy new year. Take good care.

Respectfully,



Lisa Ramsay





## Opportunities Fund helps children participate in activities

CFS Western's recently created **Opportunities Fund** will help children access an opportunity for learning, growth, development

and fun. The Fund supports activities such as music lessons and rental of musical instruments, sports registration or

equipment fees, school activity fees, tutoring, and arts programs.

The *Opportunities Fund* provides financial support to a child involved in one of CFS Western's programs and whose family is unable to provide the funds themselves.

Any child involved with CFS Western who is living in their own home may be eligible to receive support from the Fund. This includes children living in families who are

involved with the Agency's Family Services, Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre, Preschool Enrichment Program, and Victoria Day Care Centre.

CFS Western is grateful to Mrs. Lucille Hirt, whose bequest of \$80,000 to the Agency made the *Opportunities Fund* possible. Mrs. Hirt was a strong believer in helping children and her legacy to CFS Western will go a long way in doing just that.



## Rurally Speaking

**B**usy is the word to describe how the fall of 2013 was for CFS Western's rural prevention programs!

Since October, rural facilitator **Val Caldwell** visited Reston, Neepawa and Waywayseecappo with *Parenting On Purpose*, a six-week program that offers tools for successful parenting. She'll also offer *Parenting On Purpose* in Glenboro and Russell starting the end of January 2014.

In addition, Val was in Souris presenting *www.parentingteens.CALM!*, an eight-week program looking at the teen years and all that goes with them.

Finally, Val met with parents of the Agency's Preschool Enrichment Program with the *Virtual Realities* program, a one-night session that shows parents how to utilize the positive aspects of today's many technologies while helping their child become and stay Internet safe.

As well, Val is now fully trained to teach *Mothers and Daughters In Touch*, which celebrates the mother-daughter relationship and provides a friendly and fun setting where moms and their nine-to-14-year-old girls

can spend time together learning more about each other. Val will present *Mothers and Daughters In Touch* in Deloraine beginning March 2014.



## *Preschool Enrichment Program by Heather Adam, Director*

We had a fun filled fall 2013 at Preschool, and it is hard to believe that we are now well into another year!



Our fall started with a well attended Open House in September, where children and their parents and siblings came and spent their first day together. What a wonderful way to start our year! We recognize that parents are their child's first and lifelong teacher, and we value

every opportunity to partner with them in supporting their child's learning and development.

Our dedicated team of Early Childhood Educators, and Child Care Assistants have enjoyed becoming acquainted with each child and his or her family! We have been paying specific attention to the children's actions, interactions and play to determine their interests and prior knowledge. This has helped us to plan our curriculum in a way that is personalized and geared to meet the individual needs and abilities of the children in our program.

The children have made new friends and enjoyed

a wide variety of fun and stimulating activities and play experiences, both indoors and out, that are geared to support all areas of development. We have also gone on field trips to personal care homes where we have participated in activities such as singing, reading books, doing exercises, and crafts with the residents.

Our special visitors included two police officers who will visit us throughout the year; teenage musicians who we had fun singing and playing our instruments with, and a bunny. We can't forget to mention Baby Emily and her mom Lynne. They are helping us to learn all about our

feelings and emotions and to develop empathy for others in our Seeds of Empathy program.

Preschool parents continue to be actively involved in things like volunteering in our program, sharing their gifts and talents, coming for play dates with their children, and attending parent groups such as Virtual Realities and Preschool Parent Christmas Craft day.

Each day is a new adventure at Preschool!



## *Victoria Day Care Centre by Eileen Czerkowski, Director*

What a wonderfully busy fall/early winter it was at Victoria Day Care Centre!



We are so fortunate to have a large outdoor play



space that wraps around our entire building. On the cold and windy days, there is generally one of our play spaces that is sheltered from the wind. The fresh snow always adds wonder and excitement, and a whole new play dimension.

The children were very busy in December preparing for their Christmas Concert.

They baked cookies and treats to enjoy with their families.

They worked hard practicing their special parts of the performance, whether it be singing, or acting out the role of Frosty the Snowman, or even a whole group of guitar playing Rudolfs. We had a fun-filled evening!





# In Memoriam

## Deb Turmaine

Long time CFS Western staffer **Deb Turmaine** passed away in September 2013 after a lengthy fight against ALS.

Deb worked for the Agency for 35 years before going on a disability leave in 2008 due to the ravages of ALS. At the time of her leave, Deb was the night staffer at Cypress House, a position she had held for many years.

Deb started her career with CFS Western in 1973, as an 18-year-old fresh out of high school, working for Mrs. Dunn at *The Maples*. *The Maples* was a Children's Aid Society receiving home (now the site of our Dr. Wilfred W. McCutcheon Early Childhood Learning Centre).

Deb had already been working as a volunteer Special Friend at *The Maples* for three years prior to her employment. She then worked as a child care worker at *The Maples* for seven years.

With the closure of *The Maples* in 1980, Deb accepted a position as a child care worker at the Agency's Cypress House group home. She held that position for four years, followed by a nine year stint as the Senior Child Care Worker (Coordinator).

In 1993, Deb assumed responsibility for a houseparent model residence on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. This unit was always described as

'*Deb's House*'. Deb had responsibility 24/7 for four high needs adolescents of both sexes. *Deb's House* closed in 2001 and Deb moved to working nights back at Cypress House.

Deb had a real affinity for working with special needs youth. She went as far as learning sign language when one of the children in her care was deaf.

Deb loved to cook and was a good cook. Because children and youth enjoy good food, Deb always seemed to be able to connect and nurture them on this level. In turn, Deb got her own rewards from their appreciation.

Deb didn't have her own children but had dozens of

Child and Family Services 'kids'. She was a kids advocate before the term Children's Advocate was ever considered. Sometimes Deb was in conflict with workers because she was like a mother bear—these were **her** kids!

Close friend and co-worker Marg Gretchyn recalls frequent struggles with management as Deb tried to lobby for what she thought her kids needed (like learning to drive with her car!).

Thirty-five years of service to children and youth in Westman will never be forgotten!

## Gerald MacDonald

CFS Western staff, foster parents and families were deeply saddened by the sudden and tragic passing of long time foster parent Gerald MacDonald on January 1, 2014.

Gerald and Diana have been fostering for nearly fifteen years and have made a significant impact on the numerous children that have lived with them. The MacDonald's continue to be in contact with most of the foster children that resided with them in their home with their own children.

Gerald believed in hard work and honesty. One could always count on his honest opinion, and you never doubted where you stood. Their own children and foster children truly came to appreciate this quality about Gerald, which Diana balanced with her deep compassion and kindness. Most came to realize, after spending time with Gerald, the deeper heart of concern and care he offered.

Our deepest condolences are sent to Gerald's wife Diana, his daughter Alyssa, her husband Erik Elliott and their first child Will, Gerald's two sons Dallas and Dylan, and the many foster children that have been impacted by Gerald.

Gerald, we appreciate all you've done, all you were, and the legacy you leave to each one who was fortunate enough to cross your path.

## In Memoriam

## Betty Rutherford



Mrs. Rutherford sat on the Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba Board of Directors from 2000 to 2001. She passed away on December 17, 2013. CFS Western sends their condolences to her family and friends. Her obituary stated that donations in her name can be made to CFS Western or to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba, Brandon Chapter.



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Email.....[foundation@cfswestern.mb.ca](mailto:foundation@cfswestern.mb.ca)  
**Margaret Schonewille**, Development Officer

*Donate online! It's easy, safe, secure and convenient. Just visit our website at [www.cfswestern.mb.ca/foundation](http://www.cfswestern.mb.ca/foundation).*



## *Pictures with Santa huge success*

Nearly \$1,400 was raised during the Foundation's 2nd annual *Pictures with Santa* event, held November 28 and 30, 2013, at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. A whopping 163 children sat on Santa's knee, gave him their wish list and got their picture taken with him.

The event's success was a result of the generosity and support of the community. Sincere thanks go to our staff and community volunteers, and to our sponsors and supporters: Safeway (Corral Centre), Husky House Restaurant (18<sup>th</sup> Street), Sweet City Cupcakery, CAA, Westoba Credit Union Ltd., MTS Connect, The Bulk Barn, Canadian Tire,

Walmart, Stan's Fine Foods, Chatters Salon & Beauty Supply, Montana's Cookhouse, Loonie Twoons, Old Dutch Food Ltd., Ye's Buffet, Seniors for Seniors, Shilo Golf and Country Club, Sub Shop (1<sup>st</sup> Street), Santa Lucia Pizza, Leech Printing Limited, Christies Office Supplies, Sobey's (18<sup>th</sup> Street), Heritage Co-op, Ashley Furniture, 101.1 The Farm and the Westman Journal. (We apologize for any errors or omissions.)

## *'You Light Up My Life' Lottery*

We all have someone special in our life—someone who brightens our day just by being them. It could be a parent, spouse, partner, child—the list is endless!

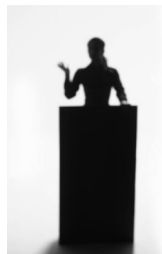
During January and February 2014, the Foundation has been selling tickets for our first ever "*You Light Up My Life*" lottery. Tickets are three for \$10. Prizes include one-night hotel stays, Wheat Kings game tickets and restaurant gift certificates.

Support and recognize that special person who lights up *your* life. For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Foundation office at 204-726-7141 or toll free 1-800-483-8980.



## *Speakers Are Us*

Are you looking for a speaker for your club or group in the New Year? We would be honoured to come and share the work we are doing in Westman as well as present a challenge on how your organization can personally be involved in our organization. Book your speaker early by calling 204-726-7141 or toll free 1-800-483-8980.



## *Wish List*

We have opportunities for you to support a specific project that can make a difference in the work we do to strengthen Westman families.

These include replacing the siding and roof on our Dr. Wilfred W. McCutcheon Early Childhood Learning Centre (which houses our day care and preschool programs), purchasing a new van for our Preschool Enrichment Program, and refurbishing our Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre, to name a few.

For information on how you can get involved and help make our wish list a reality, please contact the Foundation at 204-726-7141 or toll free 1-800-483-8980.