



# Monthly Newsletter



Working locally (Calgary, Alberta) to stop the cycle of poverty for the children

February 2009, Edition 34

## Think Globally, Act Locally.

### Community Work and Volunteering

I was reading the DI (Calgary Drop In & Rehabilitation Centre) newsletter. I read the following thank you note and wondered who will fill the shoes of our previous generational leaders and volunteers. These women inspired and served for 4 decades. Are there ample replacements each decade? Are the baby boomers giving back to the community enough? Are the Generation Xers giving back to the community enough? How will the Millennials make their impact?

*We recently received a letter that was very inspiring. This letter was from Elizabeth, a member of Scarboro United Church Women's, Unit 6, who along with other Unit members, has volunteered her time to making sandwiches for the DI. Her letter explains that as members aged (most are now in their eighties) and the group grew smaller, they had been donating \$100 towards food costs in lieu of making sandwiches. Unit 6 is having to discontinue their donations as well.*

***Elizabeth and her fellow members have been volunteering and sandwich making for over 45 years. I am so touched by the level of commitment, the loyalty and generosity of our volunteers from Scarboro United Church.***

*Elizabeth goes on to explain that their original group was 26-28 'souls' and that they have recently reduced to a group of 4 who will continue to donate privately.*

*These are beautiful people and I cannot show enough gratitude for all 45 years of support for our community. I am very touched by Elizabeth and her church community.*

*Shared by Dermot Baldwin*

### Calgary Drop In & Rehabilitation Centre (DI)

Our community is interconnected, although the DI is not directly related to helping children. We do not necessarily know the impact or understand the relationship to our community by helping the adults who live in it. Talking about the DI may give you an idea of an opportunity for directing your street money. Instead of giving out money when you are walking downtown and panhandled, or squeegeed, you could donate the money to programs and food – where your funds are making an impact in a non-faith based way to all adults in the community. The DI needs \$9 million dollars in private funding every year in order to operate. They operate the facility in conjunction with provincial, United Way; municipal and private funding. Donnell, the assistant volunteer coordinator, was kind enough to give me a tour of the downtown DI where between three facilities (DI; Centre 2032 and Centre 2507) they house 1250 people per night (90% men; 10% women).

The facility is amazing. Donnell is young, dynamic, and energetic with lots to share about the centre. They have so many programs and volunteer positions and do such good work, it is difficult to capture the essence of what I saw. They assist in transitioning homeless elderly people into the community. They have a harm reduction program that has reduced EMS and CPS calls. They promote well-behaved and volunteering homeless guests from overnight stays at their outreach centres into the DI centre and then into semi-private reserved beds if they are longer term guests who have a job. There are 2 floors reserved at the DI for semi-private assigned beds. Clients have their own locker to leave their stuff in, and they must have a job in order to stay on those floors.

And get this - they serve 3500 meals per day!

### **Greatest NEED at DI for donated items?**

Drop off at the front security desk of the DI centre on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue near the flyover into downtown – items in most need: Tampons; back packs; Lip Balm; Cough Drops; NEW Socks; NEW Underwear; Blankets. If you have donations to the Hair Salon of items like: shampoo, conditioner, gel, scissors, hair dryers, clippers – please mark those donations Attention Mark P.

### **What else can I do - COMPUTERS**

Get your IT department or yourself to donate all – working – home use applicable equipment to the DI. They can allocate items based on need for schooling or a job. The CLIC (Computers for Low Income Calgarians) program – focus on reusing computer products. This means that instead of recycling them, they will be reused first. Besides many programs that are run through CLIC, individuals can achieve their A+ certification there.

### **What else can I do – BIKES**

It's called the Bike Hub. Volunteers build bikes that are donated to charities. Cool! Why not get a gang together and go build bikes. For every 2 bikes built for charities, you can build and keep the 3<sup>rd</sup> for yourself. So you can volunteer or bring in old bikes – don't throw them out – recycle them at the Bike HUB at DI.

### **Donations**

Books – National Geographic are extremely popular in the Book Nook lending library. Donations of books are welcome.

Bikes – Bike Hub will use parts to build bikes or fix others.

Computers – personal computers in good working condition will be accepted by CLIC (Computers for Low Income Calgarians) and allocated to assist someone using the tools for school or their job.

Clothing – Gently used clothing can be donated to the Clothing Store

New Items: Tampons; Underwear; Socks; Soap; Shampoo; Conditioner; Toothpaste, Toothbrushes.

Time/Volunteer: Clothing Store(M/W/S 10-2); Computer lab; Book Nook; Bike Hub; Floor Supervision; Serving/Preparing food – lunch or dinners in groups or as a single to work with the other volunteers. Call: 403-263-5707 [info@thedi.ca](mailto:info@thedi.ca) [www.thedi.ca](http://www.thedi.ca)

Blankets: Can also be dropped off at the main desk/security – gently used or new. They use a lot of bedding at the DI, as it is washed often.

Money – And you can direct your funds to what you want the DI to spend the money on.

## Volunteer Opportunity with *children without poverty*

*children without poverty* is looking for caring community minded individuals interested in becoming a mentor for at risk or homeless families moving toward a sustainable lifestyle.

### Mentor / Volunteer Role Description

**Position:** Family Mentor

**Function:** Work with the heads (parents) of their matched family through bi-weekly meetings and discussions to complete a 1 year family goal cycle.

#### Qualifications

Before an individual works as a mentor with *children without poverty* they participate in a rigorous screening process and 8 hours of training/orientation. Mentors will have the following qualifications:

- Must be currently sustainable in their own lifestyle
- Post secondary education (or equivalent experience), preferably in business, education, social work
- Minimum 5 years of experience in the workforce
- Management/supervisory experience and/or leadership and facilitation skills
- Experience preparing and managing budgets
- Experience with performance programs – identifying goals and performance review
- Skills or experience in one of the following: financial planning, human resources, business planning, marketing, teaching, social services or account management
- Must pass a Child Welfare and Police check (and other checks that may be applicable).

#### Responsibilities:

- Building a relationship with the family. Most importantly the family heads.
- Working with *children without poverty* management, the family and yourself to design, work through and sign a contract for the arrangement.
- Make a 1 year commitment to the family. Although, assignments may be extended to 2 years if the family, yourself and *children without poverty* sustain the interest in the arrangement.
- Provide 2 reports (1 page status sheets) each year to *children without poverty*. These reports will be edited and passed on to program sponsors.
- Complete a 1 year family Goal Cycle with the family and review monthly with the family
- Allocate funds as required from the family's 'Sustain a Family' account.
- Assist the family to find quality household items - Reduce, **Reuse**, Recycle. Reuse before we provide funding for new purchases, thereby saving \$s for education and still meeting the need for household goods.
- Provide matching of goods where available from yourself, friends, other contacts, the CWP office. [www.bridgemycommunity.org](http://www.bridgemycommunity.org) or Free cycle in Calgary at: <http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/freecyclecalgary/> is a great place where *children without poverty* can get free goods for our clients.

#### Optional Responsibilities:

- CWP will accept other volunteer work, if you are interested in something other than working with the families. Negotiate with the office based on the skills you have available to offer.

#### Benefits:

- Personal reward of giving back to the community and firsthand experiencing the impact you are making with the family
- Challenging opportunities to apply your skills in new environments
- Ongoing guidance, support and coaching by the *children without poverty* office.
- A new respect for humanity, community, and humility - with a huge heaping of gratitude poured into your life.

To have people added/removed from the distribution list or to provide comments, please respond to: [Richelle@childrenwithoutpoverty.com](mailto:Richelle@childrenwithoutpoverty.com).

