



2010 – 2011 Annual Report

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

2010-2011

**Paul Layfield**  
**President**

**Rick Farrow**  
**Vice President**

**Marina Iannitelli**  
**Treasurer**

**Gina Liovas**  
**Secretary**

### **Directors**

**Laura Scali**  
**(Past President)**

**Melissa Coletti**

**Brian Dube**

**Karen Hall**

**Jennifer Pestrin**

**Andrea Tremblay**

**Rosemary Waldron**



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The 2010-2011 fiscal year was busy and productive.

A year ago, after extensive community consultation, the Board of Directors approved a new strategic plan. Objectives were established that emphasized the delivery of streamlined, flexible services by skilled clinicians acting in close partnership with families and other community service providers. I am pleased to report that the agency has made significant progress towards achieving these goals over the last twelve months.

After an extensive review of agency operations, Children's Mental Health Ontario again approved Children First as an accredited children's mental health centre. Doing so reconfirmed that the agency delivers high quality, well managed services to the residents of Windsor and Essex County. Emphasis has been placed on evidence based programming such as the Preterm Care Pathways initiative, the Triple P and COPE parenting training groups, the Hanen speech and language groups, and the Intergenerational Trauma Treatment model. We are also planning significant revision to our quality improvement monitoring system so that we can more diligently evaluate service outcomes. These and other initiatives will continue in the coming year.

Children First has also emphasized close communication with our partners and community training. In the last year, Children First hosted several well attended community training events including the Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development annual conference, the Southwest Region Children's Mental Health annual symposium and a presentation by Justice Harvey Brownstone regarding the impact of high conflict divorce and custody disputes on children. With the support of the City of Windsor, the agency conducted an extensive community consultation regarding our services to families with autism spectrum issues. The agency also assumed responsibility for the Early Signs Autism assessment clinic. Families are able to obtain an autism assessment much quicker than almost anywhere else in Ontario.

Significant work is being undertaken by the Board of Directors to strengthen executive operations. The Board subcommittees have been very busy as noted in the subcommittee reports. Of significance is the planning that is currently underway to develop and implement a marketing plan to strengthen the agency's community profile. Steps are also being taken to increase the membership of the agency, initially by approaching former board members, to stay in touch with Children First.

I wish to express my appreciation to my fellow Board members and the staff for the successes that have been achieved during the 2010-2011 year. We are fortunate to have a committed and hard working Board of Directors who enjoy working together and are united in their passion to ensure that Children First delivers the best and most helpful services it can to families of children with special needs. Much credit is also due to the Children First staff who continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to the best interests of the families they serve. They work in a constantly evolving field of service with commitment. Their daily challenge is to adapt to new approaches to service and to do so in an environment that is characterized by high demands for service and limited available resources.

In the coming year, Children First will continue to reach out to the families we serve and the community. I believe that with the support of our dedicated board and staff, Children First will be successful in meeting our ongoing objectives.

**Paul Layfield, President**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

### 2010-2011 HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

"May you live in interesting times" goes the old saying. For the Board and staff at Children First, the 2010-2011 fiscal year was certainly that. At times, it was also exciting, frustrating and always challenging. Much was accomplished. Children First sponsored, either on its own or in collaboration with community and regional partners, three significant and successful conferences regarding child development, birth to six children's mental health and custody and access disputes. The agency was reaccredited by Children's Mental Health Ontario and found to be in compliance with 99% of expected quality standards, an unusually high achievement. With the support of the City of Windsor, an extensive community consultation regarding preschool autism services was completed and results have been reported to stakeholders. Based on the objectives established in last year's strategic plan, ongoing work is being done to review the agency's organizational structure with a view to making changes before the end of this calendar year. Systematic quality improvement procedures and better demographic and outcome measurement have been elevated as significant priorities in service delivery. Recently, the agency has developed a closer collaboration with the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of Windsor Regional Hospital and will soon begin monitoring preschoolers who were born prematurely through the Preterm Care Pathways initiative.

Some of the goals we established a year ago remain unfinished. The selection and implementation of a computerized case information management system has been delayed due to software upgrading currently being completed. The Board of Directors is extensively involved in the planning of a marketing campaign designed to ensure that families who could benefit from the agency's services are aware of them and know how to contact us. The Board has also initiated a plan to expand and revitalize the membership of the corporation in order to draw on wider levels of expertise and support. There is an ongoing and important need to continue the evolution of agency services towards more evidence based approaches using assessment and treatment measurement tools that are supported in the professional literature. Finally, the time for review of our organizational structure has come to an end. The task now is to implement changes in a thoughtful and measured manner.

I am confident that Children First will continue the momentum it has achieved towards strengthening agency services. My optimism is based on a number of factors. First, our efforts to establish stronger relationships with our funders and colleagues and other community service providers have been successful although work is ongoing. The agency is acquiring a growing reputation as a transparent, flexible partner, open to new approaches, fresh thinking and early intervention. Recent funding commitments announced by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in support of children's mental health services are cause for hope. Children First is blessed to be led by a highly skilled and energetic Board of Directors. They have high ambitions for the agency, take their oversight responsibilities seriously and do not hesitate to "roll up their sleeves" to get the work done. Finally, Children First is blessed to have talented, committed staff who daily do their best to meet the complex needs of families. It should be acknowledged that they toil, like others in children's services, in an environment where demands exceed resources and the daily challenge is to reconcile the ideal with the practical. Doing so is stressful as is the constant demand to respond to changing needs, new funding priorities and evolving service approaches. Their efforts on behalf of children and families are frequently heroic.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Board of Directors for their support and salute in particular the President, Paul Layfield. In addition to their skilled support and leadership, they are good people who enjoy each other's company and work effectively together. I also want to thank our funding partners at the City of Windsor and Ministry of Children and Youth Services who face the sometimes thankless task of measuring out financial support against constantly rising needs. I am grateful to the Children First management team for their support, encouragement, counsel and capacity to maintain a positive outlook under stress. Finally, as noted above, there is great talent, commitment and resilience within the staff. With all this going for us, the future is bright.

**Mark Donlon, Executive Director**

### OUR MISSION

Children First in Essex County partners with families and the community to provide individualized support for children (birth to 6 years) with developmental and/or mental health challenges, helping them reach their full potential through early identification, education, and clinical intervention.

### OUR VISION

Children First is a leader in providing services where:

- \* All children and families are supported to help them reach their full potential;
- \* Children are supported to feel a sense of inclusion and belonging in their community;
- \* Relationships are nurtured with families, partner organizations and the community to assist children who have developmental and/or mental health challenges;
- \* Timely and tailored supports are provided by professional staff who use innovative evidence-based practices.

## BOARD OF DIRECTOR ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS 2011

### Finance Committee - Promoting Financial Stewardship

Each month, the Finance committee of Children First meets to review the financial statements and operations of the Agency. Marina Iannitelli, CMA, Board Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, Melissa Coletti, CA, a member of the Board of Directors, Jane Patterson, CA, Administration Manager for Children First and our Executive Director, Mark Donlon review actual results and prepare an explanation of variances to the budget for presentation to the Board.

Financial Statements are included in each Board package and Directors are asked to motion the inclusion of these statements for the minutes of these meetings.

The Finance committee also presents motions to the Board for spending from fund raising when required, reviews the Agency's insurance coverage annually for approval, and advises the board regarding Children First's investments on a quarterly basis.

Annually, the Finance committee meets with the auditor to review statements prior to presentation of the audited financial statements at the Annual General Meeting.

**Marina Iannitelli, Chair**

### Fundraising Committee

A number of fundraising events took place in 2010-11, thanks in large part to initiatives generated by Sharri Hamelin on behalf of Children First. Please see below for a brief synopsis.

**July 2010** - After Children First hosted one of the most successful pasta nights in Caboto history, we were invited back July 7. Though it's more difficult to fill the house during the summer months, the turnout was great and the event generated \$1,857.50.

**September 2010** - Tallies were available for the family fun run, which brought in \$5,000; the Justice Harvey Brownstone seminar generated \$1,000; and the staff barbecue brought in \$300.

**November 2010** - Children First was invited to participate in the Payless Gives campaign again this year. The organization received 150 gift cards in the amount of \$25 each, which were distributed to families in need.

**January 2011** - Children First received \$260 from a Monarch Basics online charity auction.

**March 2011** - In February, a University of Windsor business class picked Children First as its charity of choice when it was assigned a fundraising initiative. The minimum amount it had to raise was \$500. It actually raised \$610 for our organization by holding two car washes in March.

**April 2011** - Children First received 51 Easter baskets from the Rotary Club of Windsor to distribute to children and families in our program.

**June 2011** - The second annual Family Run-Walk-Wheel event was held on Sunday, June 12. The event was an overwhelming success with more than 200 runners and walkers participating. 30 Children participated in the 100 meter Kids dash! The event raised more than \$3,000 for the agency!

**Karen Hall, Chair**

## Governance Committee

Over the course of the past year the Governance Committee has met several times and achieved the following actions:

1. All existing Board Policies were reviewed for being current and were subsequently converted to our new electronic version of Policy Pro.
2. The Board Orientation Binder was reviewed in detail & updated accordingly
3. Strategic Planning was completed and an updated plan was revised and developed to lead the organization for the coming year.
4. The following Annual Reports were completed and reviewed by the Board for any necessary action.
  - a. Annual Board Effectiveness Evaluation
  - b. Organizational Performance Assessment Report
  - c. Annual Risk Task List Review
5. Completed a review of the reporting and spending requirements of fundraising dollars to ensure strict & appropriate adherence to regulations.
6. Commencing a review of effective opportunities to utilize some of our current fundraising dollar reserves.

**Rick Farrow, Chair**

## Recruitment and Nomination Committee

It has been determined through the Board Effectiveness Survey that the best complement to our present Board of Directors skill set would be a person with a medical background, Family Physician or Paediatrician who would have a firsthand understanding of issues and challenges of children and their families. A person with marketing skills would be an incredible asset also at this time, to establish in the community, who we are, and the services available to children, and their families.

The greatest focus this past year has been to develop a membership, to take part on an annual basis by attending the Annual General Meeting. We thought it would be a great idea to start the membership with a group of people who have had a genuine interest and have made significant contributions to the organization by being a part of the Administration or Board of Directors in the past and we plan to extend the membership annually by inviting new groups each year.

**Laura Scali, Chair**

## Marketing Committee

The 2010 Strategic Plan developed by Children First identified four clear Objectives and Goals, including those related to: ***Service Delivery; Staff Development and Knowledge; Community Building/Partnerships;*** and last but not least, ***Agency Promotion/Marketing.***

In order to fulfill our Mission and Vision Statement, we must ensure that families, partner organizations, medical and health professionals, and the general community understand who we are and what we do. The Marketing Committee, comprised of both Staff and Board members, formed in early 2011 to evaluate our current public education and marketing efforts, as well as identify gaps and barriers in reaching out to the community.

With a mandate of not only promoting the services we offer, but also raising public awareness of typical child development, the Committee has sought the expertise of local Marketing professionals. Currently, a request for proposals from various marketing firms has been undertaken, with proposals to be submitted in July. The Marketing Committee intends to meet throughout the summer months to review the submissions and provide a final recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Committee members will follow through on the implementation of the selected Marketing plan, in order to meet our goal of *'Increasing the recognition of the agency while ensuring that all stakeholders have information needed to access services'*.

**Gina Liovas, Chair**



## SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS 2010-11

### Appreciation for Staff

None of the services offered to children and families at Children First could occur without the very talented and dedicated staff who develop a relationship with and provide clinical intervention and support to the families we serve. They offer the following services as well as many others:

Providing assessments and discussing the results with parents, school personnel and child care centre staff; developing treatment plans and offering treatment strategies; seeking and sharing information with other service providers about the child and their family; grieving with and providing individualized assistance and hope to parents; offering suggestions and assisting in accessing community resources; collaborating with a wide variety of community partners; offering parent training and individual and group intervention; conducting workshops for the community and participating in community events.

### Birth to Six Children's Mental Health Symposium

- ❖ In June 2010, Children First and Chatham Kent Children's Services successfully partnered with the Ministry of Children and Youth to provide the Birth to Six Children's Mental Health annual symposium for the Southwest Region. The topic was "Caught in the Crossfire: Working with Young Children Exposed to Family Violence and Custody and Access Disputes." This engaging workshop for over 200 staff of birth to six programs as well as various community partners was facilitated by Dr. Linda Baker, the Executive Director of the Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System. She provided overviews of recent and relevant research, excellent resources and an interactive style that resulted in very positive feedback.

### Early Signs Clinic

- ❖ In June 2010 Children First was asked to assume responsibility for the community referrals and psychological assessments for the local Early Signs project, managed by St. Mary's Family Learning Centre and funded by a grant from Unity for Autism. This project has a number of objectives, however, early diagnosis (prior to age 3) of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder is felt to be critically important. In addition to the child receiving a psychological assessment, typically within approximately a month, Children First Intake staff have offered support and practical resources to the families involved. After assessment, most families have continued to receive services at home and/or in child care settings if needed from an Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist as well as a Resource Consultant from a Family Service Team at Children First.



### Children's Mental Health Ontario Accreditation

- ❖ To prepare for successful achievement of the Children's Mental Health Ontario Accreditation Site Review scheduled for February 2011, the Management Team and staff had been working diligently on updating all agency policies and procedures and clinical file reviews for at least a year prior to the Fall of 2010. From September to December 2010, a concerted effort was made by the Board, Executive Director, Management Team and staff to ensure understanding and compliance of all required standards, with a particular emphasis on the new Program Standards. This involved frequent communication between all levels in the organization as

well as intensive staff training. Several new internal committees such as Quality Assurance, Research Ethics and Knowledge Network were established to ensure continued focus on new processes related to these areas. The result was well deserved—an overall score of 99% and re-accreditation for the next four years regarding all the services offered at Children First.

### **30th Anniversary Conference of Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development (OAICD)**

- ❖ For 3 days in October 2010, Children First hosted the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference of the Ontario Association for Infant and Child Development (OAICD) titled “The Power of Relationships: Families, Professionals, and Policy Makers”.

The feedback from those who attended, many who were from other areas of the province, reflected appreciation for the high calibre speakers and workshops (Dr. Jean Clinton and many others) the excellent venue (Caesar’s Windsor), and the opportunity to network with service providers who are equally passionate as the staff from Children First about enhancing the lives of babies and young children and their parents.



#### **Unity for Autism Speech and Language Initiative**

- ❖ In February 2011, specific time limited funding for Children First to provide intensive speech and language services to approximately 20 children who have a diagnosis of Autism, was provided by Unity for Autism, a completely volunteer based charitable organization. The intervention is to be focused on direct in home services for children and families, as well as training and support to child care providers, with a recognition that early intervention is critical to the child’s development.



### **Community Collaboration**

- ❖ Continued emphasis on maintaining positive working relationships with community providers occurred through ongoing communication, information sharing meetings or reviews of joint protocols with the following service partners as well as others not listed:
  - The High Risk Infant Team from the Windsor Essex Children’s Aid Society (WECAS)
  - Regular meetings with WECAS Management/Supervisory staff and review of joint protocol
  - Thames Valley Children’s Centre
  - Community Care Access Centre, School Health Support
  - Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
  - The John McGivney Children’s Centre

In addition, Children First staff and management participated on at least 20 Community Advisory, Steering or Implementation Committees.

## THE PRESCHOOL SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PROGRAM



- ❖ Preschool Speech and Language (PSL) services are locally offered by three providers who work together collaboratively to form the PSL System: John McGivney Children's Centre, St. Mary's Family Learning Centre and Children First. Terri Whitfield from Talk 2 Me, St. Mary's Family Learning Centre, (lead agency) provides excellent guidance and direction as the Program Manager of the PSL system. As a system we set a target of 5 weeks for an initial speech-language assessment and on average all three providers have been meeting this target.

Over the past year, speech staff from all three programs have been working very hard to successfully achieve the deliverables(targets) set by the Ministry of Children and Youth and it is obvious that we are meeting or exceeding these targets in most cases. For example, some achievements from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011 were:

- A) **45% (target)** of all initial assessments will be provided to children by 30 months of age. We **achieved 52%**.
- B) **100% (target)** of children who are discharged for the reasons of attending JK, SK, or Grade 1 received transition plans. We **achieved 98.5%**.

**Cathy Martel, Program Manager**

## TRIPLE P



- ❖ Triple P continues to be a valuable service that Children First provides both internally to individual families and by our trained staff co-facilitating seminars and/or groups within the context of our community partnership initiative, across Windsor and Essex County. Children First co-facilitated (with a partner agency) a total of 21 individual seminars and 4- 8 session groups between April 1 2010 and March 30, 2011, providing valuable training for 235 parents!!) This evidence based program, which focuses on positive parenting skill has made an impact on most, if not all, participants. Whenever we have parents reporting increased confidence and competence in their parenting role; a more positive relationship with their child(ren) and parenting partner; and that their child is doing better; we like to celebrate! Over the next year we will be looking at continuing to support the community offerings while enhancing our internal utilization. This may include providing more Triple P training for staff.

**Sylvia Whalen, Resource Consultant/ Team Supervisor**



## COPEING WITH TODDLER BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ *COPEing with Toddler Behaviour* is an 8-session group service for parents of children 12 to 36 months of age. This evidence based intervention was designed for parents wanting to nurture positive relationships with their toddlers, use positive behaviour management strategies to promote positive behaviour, and connect with other parents in a supportive way. Parents do not need to be experiencing an identified “problem” with their young child to participate. Parents learn about parenting styles, the impact of adult and children’s personality on behaviour, and strategies to prevent and to respond to challenging toddler behaviours. Natalie Towne and Dana St. Jean from Children First led two groups in collaboration with St. Mary’s Family Learning Centre and the Windsor Essex Community Health Centre, with each of the partner agencies providing a co-facilitator, a convenient meeting venue, and child minding for families. Eighteen families, that included 24 children, participated in the group service. Participant feedback has been highly favourable with 100% of parents surveyed indicating agreement that they “learned something new”, “plan to use what was learned” and that the “workshop will be helpful” to them.



## C.O.P.E. - THE COMMUNITY PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ❖ *C.O.P.E.* is a 10-session evidence based group intervention that continues to be offered to parents of children 3 to 6 years of age who show potential for disruptive behaviour difficulties. We facilitated three *C.O.P.E.* groups on-site concurrently with a *Children’s Social Skills Group*, targeting client children referred for behaviour challenges. Over the past year, we opened up the registration for *C.O.P.E.* community wide and invited non-client parents to join in learning skills to increase positive child behaviour and better manage challenging behaviours presented by their preschoolers. Also, we collaborated with two partner agencies - St. Mary’s Family Learning Centre and Drouillard Place OEYC - to provide additional *C.O.P.E.* groups in each of those two neighbourhood locations with the added convenience of child minding. Trained Children First facilitators (Krystyne Chantler, Mike Alexander, Joan Holmes, and Natalie Towne) were assisted by other Children First staff (Amanda Abbott, Jayne Kellam, Tracey Merachli and Lynda Spickett) to service over fifty families, including 60 children, through the *C.O.P.E.* services. Feedback from both child and adult participants continues to be very positive. In addition, other partner agencies in our community have now joined Children First in this collaborative arrangement for service delivery.

**Dr. Kathleen Hofmans, Psychologist/ Team Supervisor**

# CHILDREN FIRST THANKS OUR MANY SUPPORTERS!



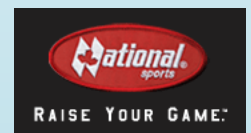
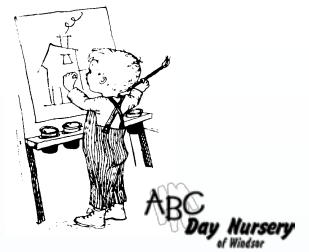
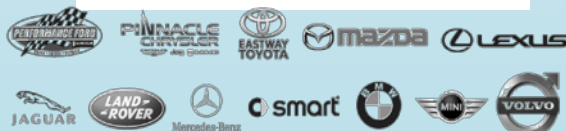
Ken Sherman from Coral Medical Health Spa donates \$1600



Sutherland Global Trust donates \$1800



Children First Pasta Nite July 2010



Children First Family Run-Walk-Wheel 2010



MARKETING • PRINT • MAIL

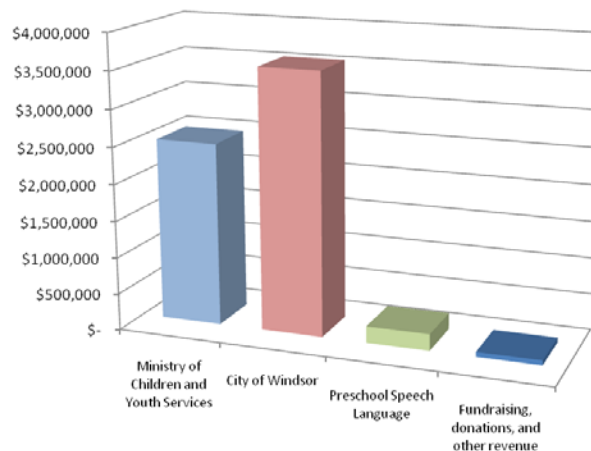


## REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES 2010-11

### Revenue:

Ministry of Children and Youth Services	\$ 2,500,575.00
City of Windsor	\$ 3,564,926.00
Preschool Speech Language	\$ 226,514.00
Fundraising, donations, and other revenue	<u>\$ 66,125.00</u>
	\$ 6,358,140.00

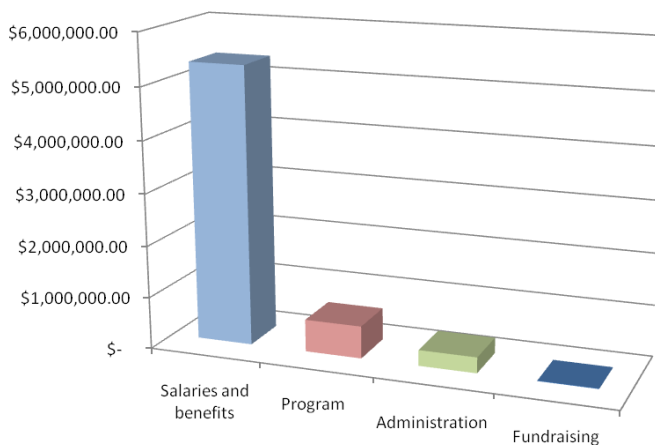
Sources of Funding



### Expenses:

Salaries and benefits	\$ 5,366,300.00
Program	\$ 624,101.0000
Administration	\$ 305,405.00
Fundraising	<u>\$ 9,289.00</u>
	\$ 6,305,095.00

Expenses



### Net Revenue Over (Under)

Expenditures \$ 53,045.00

## FAMILY SATISFACTION

It is important to Children First to gather feedback from the families we serve to ensure ongoing high quality services to children and families in our community. Family Satisfaction Surveys are sent to families approximately 6 months after service has begun and again at completion (discharge) of services.

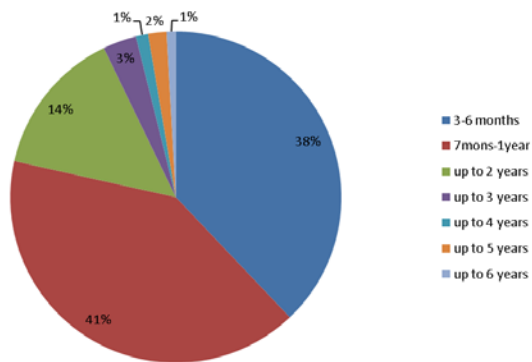
Surveys that were received between January 2009 and March 2011 were included in this analysis. There were a total of 351 surveys recorded. Both 6-month and discharge surveys were included in this analysis. The number of months the families received services from Children First ranged from 3 -72, that is some families were with Children First for less than a year and others were here for as long as 6 years.

Families reported as many as 6 different types of staff members working with their family, that is, Psychologist, Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist and Physiotherapist. The assumption was that all families received services from a Resource Consultant. The length of time families had to wait to receive services ranged from no wait (immediate service) to 6 months.

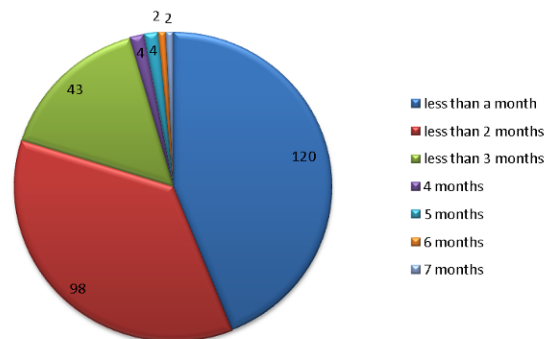
In general, families seemed to be satisfied with the services received at Children First with 96% of those who were asked indicating that they would return to Children First if necessary.

**Giavana Jones, Social Psychology Student/Research Analyst**

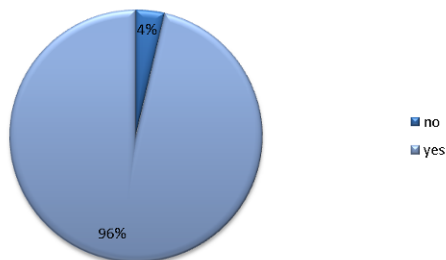
**Length of time receiving services from Children First**



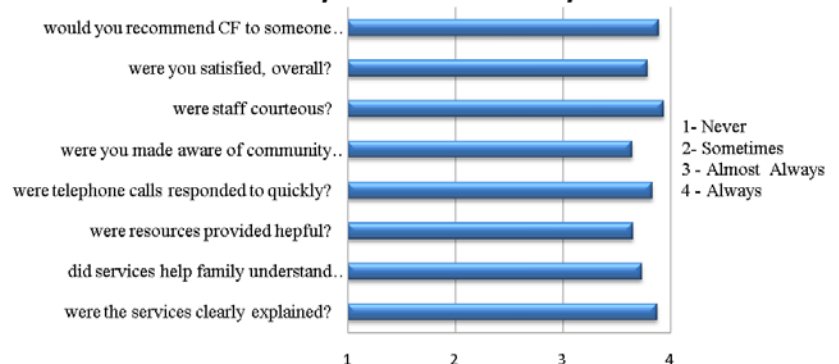
**Length of wait time (to receive services)**



**Would you return to Children First**



**Family Satisfaction Survey**





## WHAT OUR FAMILIES HAVE TO SAY....

*"[Our worker] was very helpful as a Resource Consultant and a loving mom. Her compassion and caring attitude helped immensely, and it was greatly appreciated. It is obvious, her devotion to her job, and she cares a great deal. We're grateful for her services, and she will be missed."*

*"The services we received from our Social Worker have been exceptional – along with the home visits. We attended the COPE group – this made a very big difference in assisting us to teach, be patient and be strong enough to help our daughter."*

*"The program has been very helpful and the outcome for the child involved great. Already see a marked improvement in his speech."*

*"As a mother, I find just receiving any kind of feedback with respect to my child's progress to be the most beneficial. Also, it is very helpful to observe the various types of activities my child will engage in with someone other than me, his mother."*

*"This has been a tremendous resource for our family! We were very fortunate to have our Resource Consultant on board to brainstorm a way through this frustrating time for our son."*

*"I find these home visits very beneficial. They provide certain tools for everyday learning. The concepts are very simple and yet useful."*

*"I wouldn't change nothing to your services. You helped me and my children and I thank you for all your support and effort you did."*

*"The in-home services are what makes the most difference so far. I am able to do the exercises at home with my child. I do see some difference in him already and I like that very much."*

*"I was very pleased with my first phone call to the service and how quickly I received a letter in the mail."*

*"Our Social Worker has always provided me with great information in regards to our needs. She would go out of her way to obtain information if needed. She's very understanding in her work. It was a pleasure to have her in our family and she helped us and our family."*

**Comments taken from Children First Family Satisfaction Surveys**





## SERVICE PERFORMANCE

	2006– 07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Number of Referrals	564	682	687	710	760
Number served annually	1137	1225	1251	1290	1224
Discharges	456	556	594	564	521
Front Line Staff F.T.E. (at year end)	70	80.8	87	86.1	86.4
Administrative Staff F.T.E. (at year end)	8.9	9.8	9.6	8.6	8.4

***Our current staff complement is 90, serving 1224 children between  
April 1, 2010 & March 31, 2011***

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the past year, 100% of Children First's staff participated in Professional Development. The PD Committee planned with an emphasis on internal training for all staff and many training sessions this year were aimed at preparing staff for our Accreditation site review in February. We also held training for all staff on Workplace Violence to comply with the legislation that came into effect last June.

Webinars and webcasts have become a trend and we see this as a great way for our staff to participate in Professional Development with a lower cost for the agency. We participated in web based training from CMHO and The Hospital for Sick Children among others.

Brown Bag Lunches are optional PD opportunities held over lunch that many of our staff take advantage of. We held 10 Brown Bag Lunches over the past year.

Other PD highlights this year included:

- All clinical staff received training and certification in CPR
- 18 staff attended the annual 0-6 Mental Health Symposium in London
- 20 staff attended the Justice Brownstone presentation hosted by Children First and Glengarda
- All staff received training in Crisis Prevention and Intervention
- 17 staff attended the OAICD conference that Children First hosted in October
- Our supervisors and managers all participated in professional development this year
- The Program Manager attended the CMHO Annual Conference in November

**Laurie Tiegs, Human Resources Supervisor**

## CHILDREN FIRST STAFF GIVE BACK

Children First hosts various fundraising events throughout the year to raise money to help support the children and families we serve, however what you may not know are the numerous ways the staff give back to our community and around the world. Several staff participate in community efforts to raise awareness and financial support for a vast array of charities.

In October 2010, some Children First staff participated in the iClimb for United Way at the WFCU centre, this event raised \$37, 000 for the Windsor Essex community. Thank you to all the staff that participated in this worthwhile cause.

Throughout the year staff make requests for local charities to receive our "Denim Days" donations. This past year alone we have supported Best Buddies through Community Living, WETRA (Windsor Essex Therapeutic Riding Association), Unemployed Help Centre, the Street Health Program, Voice For Hearing Impaired Children, and About Face. This list will continue grow as long as there are Fridays!

During the holiday season Children First staff rose to the challenge of "Cram the Cubicle". We were asked to bring in non-perishable food items to fill the cupboards of Unemployment Help Centre Food Bank. The response was overwhelming and exciting as the cubicle expanded. This was not the only Christmas drive that staff participated in, we also raised \$1,110 for the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. There was one particular geographical team that individually collected \$400.00 in donations for the Downtown Mission, which will be used to sponsor a complete meal for approximately 165-200 people. There is also a plan to serve a meal in 2011. Hats off to the South Team!!!

In late November 2010 Children First staff also donated money towards purchasing toys and general supplies for a child care centre in Ecuador. The children were heard throughout their neighbourhood chanting, "Toys, toys, toys!"

As various events take place around our community it is quite typical to find Children First employees getting involved. The individual support for causes can include breast cancer awareness, diabetes, Big Brothers Big Sisters, CNIB, donations to several food banks in the community, sponsoring children from around the world, Family Respite's "Walk on Erie Street", Rose City Deaf Teens, and 5 k (& higher) runs that cover a number of charities.

Children First is committed to not only serving the children and families involved in the agency, but to serve our community at large. We strongly encourage you to explore the passion that you have for a cause and give back, for the rewards far outweigh the sacrifice.

**Lori Stevens, Resource Consultant**



### Focus on Employee Safety: Workplace Violence Prevention Legislation

This past year, Children First expanded its Health and Safety program to include compliance with the new Workplace Violence Legislation. A new Prevention of Workplace Violence policy was finalized this year. We held a joint training session in June, 2010 with Family Respite Services of Windsor for all staff to provide an overview of this legislation, and to introduce the employees of both agencies to the requirements. Later, we distributed a survey to all employees to gather information about their perception of their safety in our workplace and in the community. Ninety-nine per cent of the staff responded that they felt safe at work. However, many valuable suggestions and comments were made and these will be incorporated into the next step, an agency wide evaluation of risk. Additionally, staff participated in a Crisis Prevention and Intervention Workshop featuring de-escalation techniques.

**Jane Patterson, Administration Manager**



3295 Quality Way, Suite 102  
Windsor, ON N8T 3R9  
519-250-1850  
F: 519-250-4124  
**[www.children-first.ca](http://www.children-first.ca)**