

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

WOOLWICH COMMUNITY SERVICES

SPRING 2009



OVERVIEW DON HARLOFF

WCS

- COMMUNITY INFORMATION
- GROWING TOGETHER
- THE KIDS & I
- FOOD BASKETS
- YOUTH DROP-IN
- THRIFT STORE
- CHRISTMAS GOODWILL
- CARE-RING
- RED CROSS LOAN CUPBOARD
- EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
- FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM
- ST. JACOBS FAMILY SUPPORT CENTRE

Hello to all of you.

Staff are still allowing me to get a word or two in every now and again. I am awaiting the okay to return to work, which hopefully will not be long.

This edition of the newsletter highlights the work of the Kids & I Resource Centre, located at Birdland Plaza in Elmira since 1989. It is an active, fun place for parents/caregivers and children to attend and enjoy each others company.

The next few pages will detail the program and hopefully give you a sense of its importance in the community.

Kids & I is one example of building community. Communities can take many forms including town boundaries, neighbourhoods, groups in common, church, etc..

A tremendous example of community building in the past few months in Woolwich has been the "Hockeyville" campaign. Hockeyville has brought hundreds of people together to promote Woolwich and has given all a sense of pride and purpose.

I can imagine that many lasting relationships have developed during this time and a feeling of belonging within the community has been achieved and solidified.

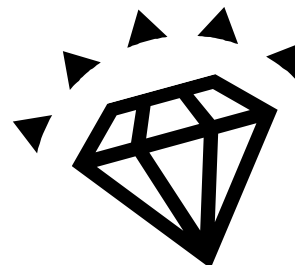
The purpose of Kids & I is much the same—to allow for people to come together with an interest in young children and parenting. It is a wonderfully

busy place with lots of activities for the children and great ideas for parenting for the adults.

The vast array of equipment and resources for lending make it an ideal spot to learn new ideas and to borrow resources in the short term. This is obvious as soon as you walk in the door. Obvious as well is the social opportunities that exist child-to-child and adult-to-adult. Toddlers and preschoolers develop friendships, learn to share and play together, discover new skills in learning, chances to do crafts, and as school approaches become ready for junior kindergarten.

We all want to belong, and Kids & I gives people a chance to belong.

April 19th to 26th is National Volunteer Week. The staff each year looks forward to this opportunity to say "Thanks" to the many volunteers of Woolwich Community Services. WCS Volunteers are the "Diamonds of the Community"

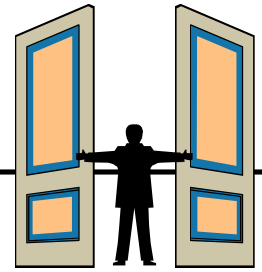


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TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Kids & I RESOURCE CENTRE

A Bit of History



mo-
ments.

It's was March 1989 and the grand opening of The Kids & I Resource Centre had arrived. It was new and exciting! It all happened at Birdland Plaza. The Township of Woolwich now had a place for mom/ caregivers and their young children to go and meet with others and play. Little did anyone know that 20 years later Kids & I would still be going strong, and it's still exciting!



Although the location hasn't changed, the size has quadrupled. Starting at approximately 430 square feet in 1989, the space was expanded to just less than 1,100 square feet in 1994 and then to its current size in 2006 of just over 1,600 square feet.

Brenda McNeely was hired as the first program coordinator, followed by Marlene Hackert and then myself, Elizabeth de Boer in 1994. Kids & I is open to anyone with young families regardless of where they live. While most families are from Elmira, people drive in from the surrounding villages such as Conestogo, Drayton, Floradale, Hawkesville, St. Jacobs, Wallenstein, Winterbourne, West Montrose and Yatton to name a few. Some drive in from Kitchener Waterloo. It truly is a community resource utilized by the whole of Woolwich Township. Kids & I has become a destination, a meeting place for friends and family to spend some time with the kids playing and visiting. But it is so much more. It is also a place for new comers to the community to meet and make new friends not only for themselves, but for their children evident everywhere: be- tween parent and child; caregiver and child; tween siblings,; between friends; between and full of wonderful



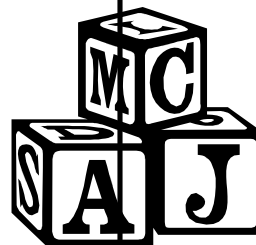
Lions & Tigers & Bears.... OH MY!



To describe the Kids & I Centre accurately, one would have to envision a preschool setting with all the different play centers. Dramatic play complete with a child size kitchen, play food, dishes, dolls, washer and dryer. Even a child size telephone booth for those important phone calls can be found. There is a Thomas the train table complete with the necessary trains. A shelving unit chuck full of cars and trucks. A workshop equipped with play tools, jumbo sized building blocks, and a Duplo table. Animals galore! Horses, cows and all the favorites from the farm, lions, tigers, and bears just to mention a few of the wild variety that are daily favorites for the children. Several shelves full of infant toys. There

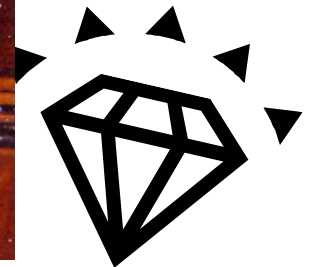
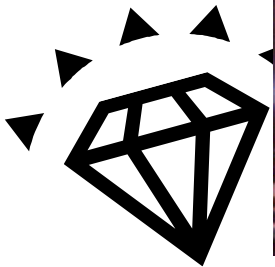
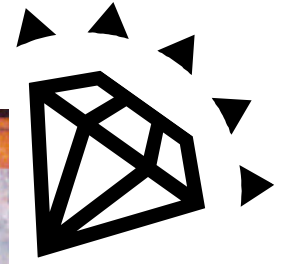
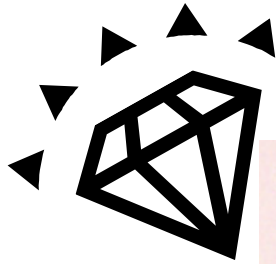


"We are happy



What makes Kids & I so special are the people that come through the door each and every day. I get to observe children full of every possible emotion, from tears at the frustration of having to leave at the finish of the day, to moments of excitement, joy and delight. I've watched children who are shy and barely talk to me blossom into children that chatter non stop. I've had the privilege of witnessing a child's innocence and wonder at this amazing world we live in. I never tire of the special sparkle they bring. Noah running in exclaiming, "We are happy today!" Or " We are here! We are here! " as Alison and Meagan come in. Last year 2,900 visits representing 625 different children visited the centre, and 2,400 visits from 363 different adults. That adds up to many happy days.

"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million." - Walt Streightiff



**LINDA & JOHN
SNYDER**
2009 RECIPIENTS
YVONNE REID MEMORIAL
VOLUNTEER AWARD

John and Linda have been married 37 years, living and raising their three children on a dairy farm just south of Winterbourne. John retired after milking cows full time for 45 years. He traded in his big equipment for a tractor, snow blower and a rototiller. He enjoys wood working and has taken over most of the lawn and garden work. Linda retired from the Thrift Shop which she managed for 17 years. She enjoys sewing, quilting and gardening. They are both active members of the Bloomingdale Mennonite Church. John ushering and Linda on committees and the women's group.

They both enjoy volunteering at the Thrift Shop 2 mornings a week. Linda prices household items and bedding. (Actually Linda does a lot more than that) John tests electrical equipment and "plays" with all the battery toys(John also does a lot more than that). John's strength and good nature is appreciated when it comes to moving things and carrying out bags. Linda's relaxed personality and sense of humour is appreciated when the back room is ceiling high with donations.

"Give what you have. To someone, it may be better than you dare to think." H. W. Longfellow

A Toy Lending Library and Much More.....

The centre also offers a toy lending library. The library has been part of the centre right from the beginning, however, has expanded its inventory over the years. Toys, puzzles, books, videos are available for a two week



lending period. The library is an excellent, economical way to expand the play materials accessible for the children. A FABULOUS opportunity for Grandmas to always have a selection of current fun toys, big and small, but no need to store them.

In conclusion, Kids & I can best be summed up by the comments made by of our moms: "As a new mother it's not just a place to go and get out of the house, it's a place where you feel supported"....there's always a new face to see and to talk to." "I know that Kids & I Centre some weeks gets me as a mother through those crazier days" Another one wrote: "Kids & I has been a consistent source of enriching activities, community, friendship and fun." Finally a caregiver wrote: "As a newcomer to Elmira 5 years ago Kids & I was the place I could meet neighbors and friends. Working from home doesn't allow much time for meeting new people and socializing. Its been a wonderful, friendly, safe place to bring the children for a fun filled morning or afternoon."



Kids & I Resource Centre HOURS

Monday	9:00 to 12:00
Tuesday	9:00 to 12:00 1:00 to 3:30
Wednesday	9:00 to 12:00 1:00 to 3:30
Thursday	9:00 to 12:00

DATES TO REMEMBER



Antique Show & Sale
Silent Auction
Antiques Appraised

Elmira Arena
Fri. Apr. 2nd
Sat. Apr. 3rd

Volunteer Appreciation to Celebrate the "Diamonds of the Community"
April 20th, 7:00 pm



The "AMAZING" Wild Woolwich Challenge **Sat. May 2nd**



Jeanne Renault Golf Classic
Thurs. Aug. 13th

Youth Centre moves to
NEW WOOLWICH RECREATION CENTRE

FISH FRY & AUCTION

Saturday Sept. 19th
5 to 7 pm.



Lions Hall,

Thank You ,Thank You, Thank You!!!

To all our donors, volunteers and community. Your financial contributions, time, talents, fundraising support has once again made it possible for Woolwich Community Services to enjoy another year of providing friendly, useful services and support to all community members.



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