

# Report to the Community

## Youth achieving their dreams Community sponsorships assist youth in the care of Peel Children's Aid to achieve a brighter future

Every year, Peel Children's Aid encourages youth in their care to pursue educational goals by providing annual scholarships and bursaries. Six bursaries and one Achievement Award are provided through the generosity of community sponsors.

The following are profiles of this year's inspiring winners:

### Saudatu Sasey

OACAS Clark Grant and Carl Ingebertson Bursary



Arriving alone in Canada from Sierra Leone just over two years ago, Saudatu Sasey has come a long distance—not just in miles. She has been working night and day on her English, and in order to graduate from high school on her timetable, going to school day and evening, and throughout this summer. She is one determined, motivated, dedicated individual—well deserving of her bursary, which will help her go on to college and start an accounting and business management program.

"I see immigrating to Canada as a privilege and a blessing," says Saudatu. "Finding new friends and nice people who accept me as part of their family, and also helping me to return to school to complete my education has brought happiness, never mind that I have no biological family. God bless Canada for giving me back the hope of life and education."

### Jacques Kabelu-Tunsele

Michael DeCambr Memorial, Knights of Columbus Bursary



Born in the Congo, Jacques Kabelu-Tunsele is fluent in English and French. Grateful for the support of friends and foster parents, Jacques strives to be a role model for his sister and to put behind him the hardships that necessitated the support of Peel Children's Aid. He is anxious to be self-sufficient so he can put his sister through college.

"I am in the Tool and Dye Program of George Brown College," says Jacques. "With this bursary, I will be able to return to the program and continue with it. I want to be able to get a full-time job and support myself financially. Completing college with a decent grade point average will show my appreciation to all who have supported me."

Jacques coaches basketball for the Brampton Minor Boys Basketball Association, where he dedicates one day per week for practices and a game every week for children aged 12. And he still finds time to play hoops with his friends at a local community centre, where he's Captain of his team and has been voted Most Valuable Player two years in a row.

Jacques gives 100 per cent to his family, school and community and knows his education is his future. This bursary will help him get there more quickly—like a three pointer.

### Nicole MacNeil

Peel Senior Police Bursary



Hard work, long days and new challenges haven't stopped Nicole MacNeil from pursuing a career in Hotel Management. After a co-op work/training experience in the fall of 2003, Nicole has learned a great deal about the working world as well as the food service industry.

"I'm a very hard worker, but I found there were a few personal challenges during my co-op placement," says Nicole. "The best thing was to turn everything into an opportunity to learn. And I learned lots!"

This outgoing, high-energy individual is an overachiever who has great expectations, according to all who know her. She has the drive and determination to succeed, despite difficult childhood circumstances. Nicole is involved in the community through her church. She is on the student leadership team and helps out when there is a need.

With no family to aid her with finances, this bursary is an important next step in keeping Nicole successful.

### Teneisha Campbell

Jim Ho Bursary



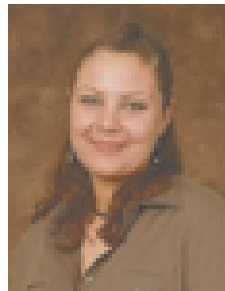
Serious and focused, Teneisha Campbell knows what she wants to achieve in life and is prepared to work hard and go after it. Only 18, she already plans to use her bursary in the pursuit of an accounting degree and its advanced designations. She is in Canada by herself, her family in another country, making this award all the more important since she pays rent while going to high school and working at a job that "doesn't pay enough".

"I have extended family members here, but they are not able to help me financially," says Teneisha. "I'm a strong, reliable, sociable, easy-going and motivated person who knows what I want to achieve in life. This bursary means a lot to me because I'm very serious about my career goals."

Teneisha has demonstrated her ability, maturity and drive to reach her goals by doing exceptionally well at school and receiving ongoing Honours Awards. She has her Canadian Citizenship, and demonstrates all the qualities of a responsible and committed citizen.

### Michelle Scharfe

BMO Bursary



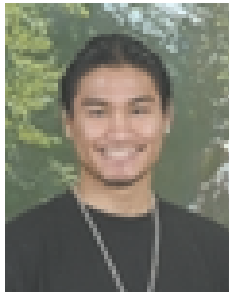
A mature and independent youth, Michelle Scharfe, is ready—in a sense—to go back to school. After some time off, where she's been actively volunteering in the Ambassadors Program, speaking in schools about healthy life choices, as well as working part-time and pursuing art skills, Michelle wanted her bursary to get her GED so she can go to college. She's interested in either social work or the Child and Youth Worker Program.

"I have gained a lot of useful work experience and now I'm filling in educational gaps, to move to post-secondary education," says Michelle. "I want a career and my plans for college are rock solid. College is not a choice, it is a must to better myself and to achieve a meaningful career."

In addition to her tutoring for post-secondary education, Michelle volunteers in the community, planting trees for Outbound. She's joined an art group and is transforming scrap yard material into art—now that's the joy of recycling!

### Leif McDonald

Mississauga Rotary Club Bursary



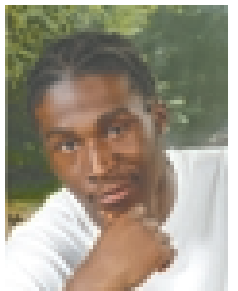
Leif McDonald is no stranger to adversities. Ever since he was a little kid, he was faced with challenges and obstacles, and he's managed to overcome them all. And all of this is to say, that given this experience, his bursary is going towards an education in the Child and Youth Worker program.

"I discovered, growing up in foster homes, that I had a talent for helping younger kids," says Leif. "I could help look after them, but more than that, I could help them gain a sense of their own talents and skill, give them a sense of who they are. I always felt there had to be a way for me to help out, and after looking around, the Child and Youth Worker program is it."

Leif is passionate about his education and the choice he's made. He's moved from homes to homes and schools to schools, and taken this as an opportunity to see and experience different lifestyles and people. He feels he's won the struggle of life and he's ready to share his knowledge and experiences so he can help others help themselves.

### Michael Adekolu

Independence Achievement Award



A likeable athlete who is reserved, yet resourceful, Michael Adekolu's eye is on the NFL. His bursary prize will be spent on his education and football training, particularly additional football equipment that will help him become a better player. Even though he's only 16, during 2001-2002, he received letters of interest from various scouting groups.

"During those years, I played Pee Wee, and our team won the Provincial Championship," says Michael. "I was named Most Valuable Player and given a trophy. It was a moment to remember."

Football is not Michael's entire life—he devotes significant time and energy to his Sunday School and Summer Camping Ministry. He is a positive role model for younger children and enjoys mentoring them. His commitment and consistency to his future career has been noticed, and is paying off.

## CELEBRATING 60 years of caring

While Peel Children's Aid is celebrating 60 years of service in 2004, it has been serving the community for more than nine decades. It began in 1912, caring for homeless, neglected and abused children in Peel County and the surrounding area.

Over the years, it has gone through mergers, to serve the growing, diverse communities in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon and it has expanded its vision and mandate to protect children and to strengthen and support the well-being of children and their families. Peel Children's Aid works with its communities to ensure they are caring communities for the children and families that live in them.

Our Mission: to protect children and to strengthen and support the well-being of children and their families.

# Report to the Community



Board President *Barbara Horvath*, right  
Executive Director *Paul Zarnke*

## Message from the Board President and the Executive Director

This year marks Peel Children's Aid's 60th anniversary of caring for the children and families of Peel Region.

Since its inception, the Agency has been committed to protecting and caring for children when parents or caregivers are

unable to do so. Over the years, the Agency has evolved to meet the community's changing needs. It has gone from an organization serving small communities to a large, professional Agency serving more than one million people in rapidly growing, diverse communities.

Our Agency's strength comes from the people who have dedicated themselves to the Peel Children's Aid, many for most of their careers. We've been blessed with the quality and commitment of our people – staff, volunteers and foster parents – at every level—who care and are committed to the well-being of children.

We believe that Peel Children's Aid plays a key role in ensuring a healthy community. Along with our partners—school boards, police, the justice system, public and health community agencies—we work diligently to keep children healthy, safe and wherever possible, in their family home.

An example of one of our new community partnership programs is the CONNECT program, a critical new initiative launched with Peel Children's Centre last year. CONNECT provides intensive support to children and youth aged 7 to 15, currently involved with our Agency, who are coping with behavioural problems, having difficulty at school or suffering from mental health issues and at risk of coming into the care of Peel Children's Aid. This program provides intensive support so children can remain safely with their families. In this way, we can support families and kids without having to bring the children into care.

We're also getting more successful at helping parents with adolescents – supporting them to manage their children's behaviour. With fewer youth coming into care, costs are being managed and growth has stabilized.

This is the first full year of our new Foundation, and we're extremely encouraged by its activities. Although the Agency is funded by the Province, that funding only covers the narrow

range of mandated programs; quality of life programs like burials, summer camp, even Christmas, require additional funds. The Foundation enables us to develop a range of opportunities for people who want to help children become adults who are productive, fully-functioning members of society.

At any point in time, Peel Children's Aid is parent to 500 children and is working with upwards of 1,000 families. The effectiveness of the Agency can be measured, we believe, by the fact that fewer children are coming into care. Those that do come into care are more often being placed with foster families as opposed to group homes which enables the children to live in as normal a family situation as possible. Peel has the second lowest ratio of children in care of any city/region in Ontario; another measure of both the Agency's performance and the quality of support provided by the other services in the community. This is a truly remarkable result given the low levels of funding for community supports in Peel, as has been shown by the Peel Fair Share Campaign.

Another area the Board is extremely excited about is diversity. We now have a full-time Diversity Manager who is helping the Board and staff to deliver our services in ways that are responsive and meaningful to all segments of our diverse community.

We see ourselves as an interface between the Ministry and the community, and good partners to both. We are working hard to strengthen the relationship with the community and all our partners and service providers on a daily basis. We want to raise the Agency's profile, as well as the understanding of its full mandate. We want the Agency to be seen as a resource for strengthening families, not just as a solution for a problem.

The new Provincial Ministry of Children and Youth Services is exploring ways to improve how services are provided to children and families. They're looking for permanent solutions faster, like adoption. We want to increase our ability to make a difference in the lives of the children and families we work with. We want to invest our time and energy in the things that deliver the best outcomes for children and families.

We continue to work diligently to protect children and support families in our community, and look for ways to do things better. We will be improving our services—directly and collaboratively. Every child deserves to be loved and to be safe.

## Board of Directors

2003 – 2004

### Executive Committee

*Barbara Horvath*  
President

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Vice President

*Marion Keddie*  
Treasurer

*Angela Johnson*  
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Executive Member

### Directors

*Elke Nowak*

*Beryl Ford*

*Joe Pimentel*

*Bryan Law*

*Maurice Hudson*

*Robert MacFadden*

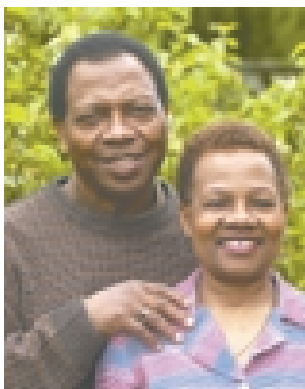
*Fernando Saldanha* \*  
Past President

*Wayne Renwick* \*  
Vice President

*Executive Director*  
*Paul Zarnke*

\* resigned during the year

## Foster Parenting



Bev & Hugh Harvey

### Giving Back, Giving Thanks

Bev Harvey and her family were drawn to become a foster family by two things: one was a friend who was already a foster mom and the second was that as a family they were thankful for all they had, and felt fostering was one of the best ways to give back to the community.

"There is a lot of training, because fostering requires a unique mindset," says Harvey. "These children need plenty of love. They sometimes bring emotional baggage."

Peel Children's Aid provides 21 hours of classroom training over seven weeks plus a minimum of two home visits—after the application and paperwork has been reviewed and the decision has been made to progress to this step.

"We receive excellent training in child development, coping strategies, recognizing symptoms of abuse, and learning how to be the best foster parent you can be," says Harvey. The Agency provides ongoing support with a

calendar of activities twice a year, support groups once a month with access to additional resources and a support worker always available by phone.

"There's a lot of anxiety associated with this—taking someone else's child into your home," says Harvey. "You have a little bit of knowledge about their upbringing, but mostly you just let them know it's a safe place to be."

"As a foster parent, you see yourself as part of a team—with the schools, the parents, the workers," says Harvey. "When we know the goal is to re-unite the child with the family, we respect that and work towards it as well."

Bev feels that one of the greatest rewards of fostering is to see the outcome. "You see children who are angry and hurt, and feel you might not be meeting their needs. Then, after they return to their family, you hear that you did help them. To see the outcome of your fostering role, is the greatest blessing."

### Exactly What We Needed

With two teenagers and a financial services business that could run with her husband and a secretary rather than her, Gwen Fischer became a foster parent two years ago. She has a friend who'd been fostering for a long time, so it wasn't a totally foreign concept.

"I love kids," says Gwen, "becoming a foster parent was exactly what we needed right now."

The pre-training by Peel Children's Aid helped the Fischer family know what was involved in becoming a foster family and that it wasn't all going to be a bed of roses.

Gwen took all the courses that were offered, and learned all she could from other foster parents she met.

The Fischers started with one six-week-old baby, then



Gwen Fischer and family

got braver and took a second baby, since their teenagers were old enough to help them with the care of the children. Once into the "baby swing" again, Gwen enjoyed it, and even got a double stroller for outings.

The two babies in the Fischer's care are siblings, and now are up for adoption, together, with the same adoptive family. This is the first adoption Gwen is going through, and it's going perfectly. As with most adoptions, it requires a full month of visits.

"Our kids' friends spend a lot of time with the boys, and their parents are impacted—they offer toys and clothes. Our fostering touches the wider community," says Fischer. "Everyone wants to see the boys before they go—they are lovable kids with great personalities."

"At first, with the adoption, anxiety kicked in. It's hard when you don't know what the adoptive family will be like. After we met them, we could tell it was a perfect match and the boys would be in good hands. That's all any foster parent wishes for the kids being adopted. And now, we're on to the next adventure."

**OUR MANDATE • Investigate child protection needs • Protect children • Provide guidance and counselling to meet protection requirements and prevent circumstances where protection becomes necessary • Provide care for children • Supervise children under our care • Place children for adoption**



# Youth Achieving Independence

James McGuirk, a Peel Children's Aid independence worker, took one of his charges, Jon\*, out to a birthday lunch to discuss getting into college this September through the Canadian Tire Associate Dealers' program. The snag -- you need your Grade 12 or GED to get into college. James advocates on Jon's behalf with the GED program. Jon needs this extra support because otherwise, he would give up on his dream of being an auto mechanic and lose this opportunity. "It's too easy for these teens to take the route of least resistance," says James.

## Teaching life skills

James, along with two colleagues, is an independence worker in a program designed to help kids who struggle with independence. These are teens, aged 16 to 21, who need intensive intervention in order to become successful members of society. They have little or no family contact; they can no longer stay in foster or group homes for various reasons; and they're the kids who struggle with school, drugs and legal issues.

"When I started with this program three years ago, the issues I was dealing with were non-payment of rent," says McGuirk. "They have now escalated to weapons and drugs. It makes the program that much more important. We have more kids coming into the program at 16. It is difficult trying to live on your own at 16."

Independence program teens receive funding from Peel Children's Aid for rent, food, phone and the bus, which typically gets them a room in someone's home. It's rare they can afford an apartment, even if they find someone to share it with.

## Being an advocate

For these workers, the largest part of their job is accessing and advocating for these kids, as well as showing them how to do it for themselves. "If they can be given the time and shown how to access the resources in the community, they'll do fine," says McGuirk.

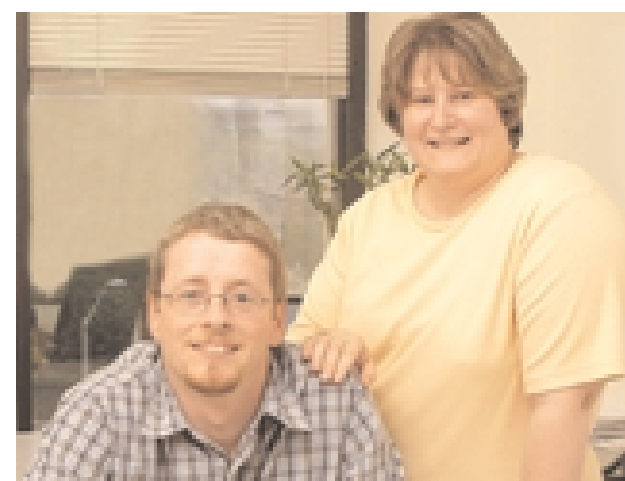
One former group home youth said to McGuirk, "When you grow up in a group home, your mindset is guarded, and you feel programmed to fail. You believe that society is against you anyway." James says understanding the way these kids think, where they're at and how they measure success makes all the difference in helping them become independent and successful.

The Independence Workers run a Life Skills Group every spring for 10 weeks, meeting once a week with guest speakers, so the kids can gain knowledge they need once they're on their own. Speakers come from public health, speak on the landlord/tenant act—the range is extensive and questions are encouraged.

## Youth help themselves

The kids also have their own youth group—TiCTaC (Teens in Care Talking about Concerns). This is an open-ended group where teens publish a newsletter as well as organize events like dances, basketball games, go to movies, bowling, a sports event. "Two youth also attended a weekend camp for youth in care that showed them there was a bigger world out there...and that they weren't alone in their problems," says McGuirk.

James says one of the teens writing in the TiCTaC newsletter wrote an article extolling the virtues of grow-



James McGuirk, left and Tracey Neilson Absent, Sylvia Kolitsopoulos

ing up in a foster home. "There's nothing wrong with being in foster care, because the family I grew up with was great."

The youth leave the Agency's independence program at age 21. The workers do their best to make sure each young adult is employable—has a skill, is in college or has a degree; that somehow, they can provide for themselves before he or she is let loose on the world and the Agency must say good-bye.

"Seeing the teens being successful—that's what it's all about," says McGuirk.

\* name has been changed to protect teen's privacy

# Volunteering at Peel Children's Aid

## A Special Bond



Bruce Mitchell

### After 13 years

as a foster parent, Bruce Mitchell wanted to stay involved with Peel Children's Aid, so he became a special friend—like a Big Brother—for eight years, then took up driving after that. Now he drives seven days a week, taking children to their appointments, whether it's the doctor, therapy, family visits, church or friends.

"I drive most kids regularly, often three times a week, so they get comfortable with me and it's less traumatic for them," says Mitchell. "When kids are in need, you talk; or with teens in the car, you put on their music. After six or seven months you know what they need and they feel comfortable."

Bruce has been a volunteer driver for five years now, and his wife and son have joined him. He says you get used to the children and it's heartbreaking when they're

no longer part of your life, although you're glad when they've moved on.

"These bonds between me and the kids are precious," says Mitchell.

## Challenging Work

When Sandie McIntyre retired from the classroom five years ago, she wanted to continue to use her skills developed over a lifetime as a teacher/librarian. She wanted challenging volunteer work, but unrelated to teaching per se. Peel Children's Aid Society caught her interest.

"Adoption Disclosure seemed right for me," says McIntyre. "I had done enough report cards and research in the library and I thought 'I can do that'."

Adoption Disclosure involves a request from an adoptee (usually 18 or an adult) or a birth parent or sibling to get the non-identifying social history and circumstances that led up to the adoption. For the birth parent, they usually want to know about the adoptive parents, age, occupation, whether there are other children in the adoptive home, how the child was received during the probation period, and the month and year the adoption



Sandie McIntyre

was finalized. Sandie trained with an adoption worker on how to set up biographies and the write-ups.

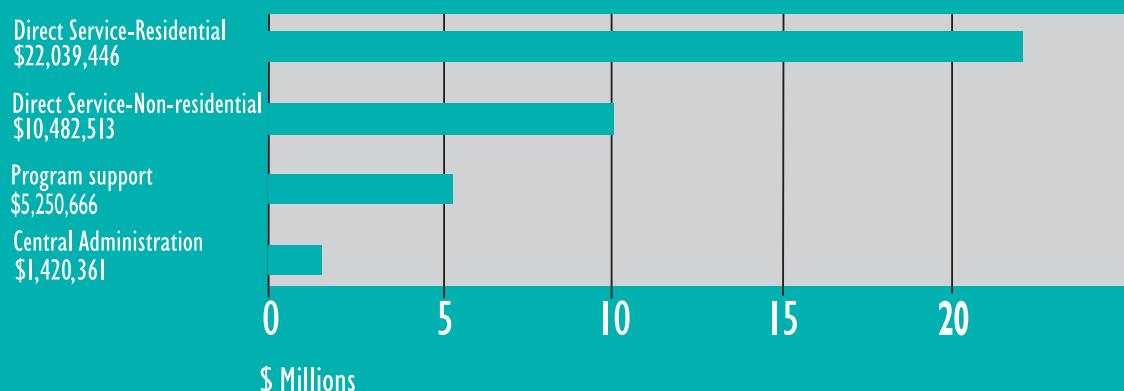
"It's always ongoing. If I weren't doing this, it would be the current adoption workers having to do this on top of their regular workload," says McIntyre. "I also feel it's providing the missing link to someone's past that may help them put his or her life into perspective." She goes in weekly for a couple of hours, and if it's a complex file, it might take four or five work sessions to finalize a request, plus the time at home to process the biographical report.

"It's different from my career, but I love it," says McIntyre.

There are many volunteer opportunities available, visit our website [www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org) or call 905 796-2121, for more information.

## How Our Resources Are Allocated

April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004



For a complete copy of our audited financial statement, please call 905-796-2121 ext.418

## About Us

- 20,400 is the number of hours 165 volunteers gave to children and youth last year
- 325 – the number of Peel Children's Aid staff who serve the Region of Peel
- 7,745 - the number of families served last year.
- 13,174 - the number of children helped last year
- 5,881 - the number of investigations conducted in 2003/2004
- 495 is the average number of children who were in our care each month
- 156 is the number of foster homes in Peel Region
- 35 children were adopted in 2003/2004
- 247 Crown Wards were in our care at the end of our fiscal year
- 907 children were in our care during the year

## New Peel Children's Aid Foundation

While core protection services provided by Peel Children's Aid are funded by the provincial government, other programs providing education, prevention and additional services to children and families are funded entirely by generous donations from the community.

The new Peel Children's Aid Foundation was incorporated in 2003 to raise the funds needed to maintain and increase these programs. The Foundation assists Peel Children's Aid in keeping children safe, and provides enrichment and skills development opportunities that can be out of reach to

children under Children's Aid supervision.

Supporting positive futures for children at risk makes sense from every perspective. Whether donors care about assisting individual children, or seek to reduce the public cost of placing children in care, Peel Children's Aid Foundation funds programs that achieve these goals.

Every child deserves a chance to experience a happy and nurturing childhood and become a productive, well-adjusted member of society.

Peel Children's Aid Foundation helps the neediest children in our community to make these goals a reality.

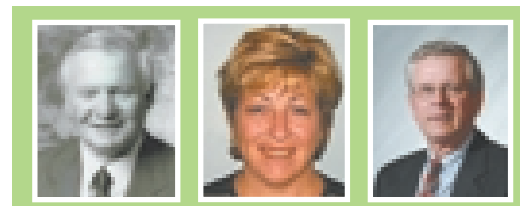


Peel Children's Aid Foundation Board of Directors

Back Row - (L to R): Paul Zarnke, Executive Director, Peel Children's Aid Society, Catherine Hinton, Executive Director, Peel Children's Aid Foundation, Beryl Ford, Jim Murray, Todd Kerr

Front Row - (L to R)  
Maureen Ellis, Vice-President  
Rick Bino, President  
Tom Bulloch, Treasurer  
Doug Munro

Absent - (L to R) The Honourable William Davis, Lucy Marra, Ray Smith, Balwinder Takhar (not pictured)



### Programs funded by Peel Children's Aid Foundation

**Bursaries** for community college, university and apprenticeship programs.

**"Sunny Summers" Camp Program**, providing day and overnight camp experiences for children and youth.

**"Special Wishes, Special Needs" Program**, providing funds for activities such as sports registration, dance and music lessons, cultural activities, class trips, etc.

**Infant Nurse Program Supply Cupboard**, providing infant formula,

diapers and other essential supplies for families requiring assistance in caring for their children younger than 18 months old.

**"Holiday Wishes" Program**, providing gifts, toys, clothing, food vouchers and personal hygiene kits to children and families during the holidays.

**Community Education** supplies including videos, brochures and slide presentations, to educate the public on such topics as positive parenting, shaken baby syndrome, and the Duty to Report.

## Coming Events

The Mississauga Bus and Truck "Glen Marshall Memorial Golf Tournament" to be held on Tuesday June 29th at 12:30 p.m. (Shotgun start) at the Caledon Country Club. Proceeds to Peel Children's Aid Foundation. For more information please call Tom Glover at (905) 826-8486.

**Frigate and Firkin Human Foosball Tournament, July 10th and 11th** Put your 8-person team in now, or enter as an individual! Proceeds to Peel Children's Aid Foundation. For more information please call the pub at (905) 456-8060.

**Inkarma Golf Tournament**, August 12, 2004 at the Lakeview Golf Club. All proceeds to the Peel Children's Aid Foundation Education Bursary Fund. For more information please call Deborah Ferrari at (905) 796-2121 ext. 231.

**Annual Fall Auction and Dinner**, Thursday October 28th, The Garden Banquet and Convention Centre, Brampton. For more information please call Deborah Ferrari at (905) 796-2121 ext. 231.

## Special thanks to local businesses and community groups for their support

**Brampton Real Estate Board** held a Pool Tournament and raised \$700 for Peel Children's Aid Foundation.

**Frigate and Firkin Pub** in Brampton raised over \$1700 for the Foundation at their 2003 Human Foosball Tournament.

**Vesuvio's Ristorante** Anniversary Lobsterfest Dinner raised more than \$10,000 for Peel Children's Aid Foundation.

Your donation of financial support, goods or volunteer time can make an immediate and positive difference in the lives of vulnerable children in Peel. Please call the Foundation at 905-796-2121 ext. 276 to learn how you can help.

## Positive parenting tips

### Positive Discipline of Older Children

*Problem-solving and making choices help prepare children for their teen years.*

- Teach problem-solving and solve problems together.
- Describe behaviour—time outs don't work now, so describe the behaviour not the child.
- As children get older, move from choices to negotiating it's a useful skill your child can use throughout his or her adult life.
- Delay privileges until responsibilities are met.
- Praise good behaviour.
- Use logical sequences.
- Let natural consequences teach your child (where safe).

### Positive Discipline of Young Children

- Young children have short memories. They need to be gently reminded about the rules.
- If your child is frustrated or unable to solve a problem, try a different activity—this can reduce the likelihood of a tantrum.
- Let children experience the consequences of their actions if it is safe to do so.
- If a child just refuses to behave or follow the rules, give him or her a time out.

- Remember to make fair and simple rules.
- Communicate so that your child understands what you expect.
- Be positive—focus on what to do.
- Give children time to respond—they don't like to stop doing things they enjoy.
- Be a good role model—live what you teach.

### Reporting Abuse or Neglect

Anyone who suspects a child is in need of protection is required to report abuse or neglect to their local Children's Aid. In Peel, call the Peel Children's Aid at (905) 796-2121. Listen to the child, write down the facts after the conversation and report it immediately.

### Positive Parenting of Infants

Peel Children's Aid believes that no infant should be spanked, shaken or scolded. Babies are too young to understand limits and rules.

- Build relationships—before you can work on discipline, you have to develop a bond of love and trust
- Develop a routine—routines help babies feel safe and secure

- Crying baby—respond when your baby is crying, it's a communication for food, comfort or a clean diaper. If you feel your anger building, it's important to maintain control. Place the baby somewhere safe, such as their crib and close the door for a few minutes and relax. In a few minutes you will feel calmer and ready to console your crying infant.

## Contact

### Peel Children's Aid

101 Queensway West  
6th floor  
Mississauga L5B 3P7  
905-275-7444  
905-275-1600 (Fax)

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Suite 204  
Brampton, L6X 4J2  
905-796-2121  
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[www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org)