



THE NEW LIVES NEWSLETTER

Creating new
opportunities.
December 2016



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As the summer ends and brilliant fall colours overtake the green leaves of the trees, I reflect on wonderful recent experiences at Massey Centre and look forward to the changes in the organization as much as those in the season.

In August, the Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister of Children and Youth Services attended a media event at Massey Centre and made an announcement about the Partner Facility Renewal Program. Massey Centre received over \$850,000 for minor capital projects!

Good funding news continues. The Canada-Ontario Agreement on French-Language Services Fund approved \$18,000 for a new Massey Centre initiative, Improving Access to French-Language Services for Pregnant and Parenting Teens Across Ontario. A staff was hired to collaborate with over 20 organizations across Ontario to enhance each organization's capacity to provide and promote French-language services to francophone clients.

It is a priority for us to collaborate with other organizations in East York in delivering infant and early childhood mental health services. During the summer, in partnership with Infant Mental Health Promotion, The Hospital for Sick Children, we created the East York Infant Mental Health Table. Several organizations serving the needs of local families and caregivers with children aged up to six spent three days developing a plan to address gaps and opportunities in the delivery of infant and early childhood mental health services.

We will be very busy over the next few months implementing these newly funded programs and initiatives and fixing up our buildings. We hope you will enjoy the fall and the good news that follows in the rest of our New Lives Newsletter!

Ekua Asabea Blair
Chief Executive Officer



AGES & STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES (ASQ) DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING



ASQ is a trusted screening tool that reveals knowledge about young children's development.

At Massey Centre the ASQ tool is used in the Maternal Infant Mental Health (MIMH) program. Since May 2015, MIMH in collaboration with other departments have screened over 100 children using Ages & Stages Questionnaires.

Two types of questionnaires are used for onetime screenings or at different intervals for ongoing monitoring children ages 1 month to 5½ years old. ASQ-3 questionnaires focus on five areas of development: communications, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving and personal-social. Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE2™) screens for difficulties in social emotional development.

The results of the questionnaires identify the child's strengths, and areas for improvement, if the child's development is on track or if the child needs a more in-depth assessment to determine if specialized services are required. It also

identifies what steps parents and caregivers can take to support the child's growth at home.

Parents, who have participated with their children in the screening, reported that their knowledge of their children's development increased. They happily shared the benefits of the screenings with their friends, creating increased awareness among other parents in the community of the importance of early screening.

The ASQ tool is currently being used in the Infant Parent Development Clinic pilot project. The weekly sessions are being offered to families in the community with children—newborn to age 3.

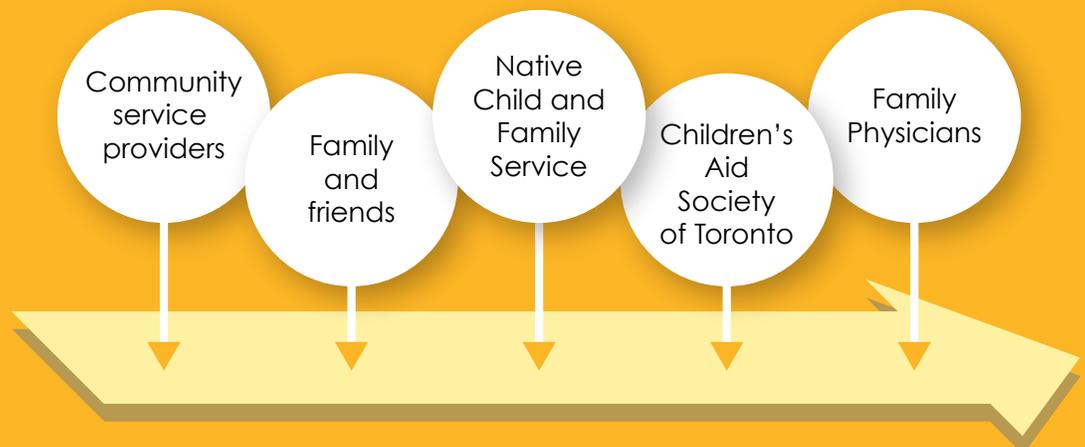
Some of the topics being addressed include the importance of developmental screening, brain development in infants, crying and attachment, fussy baby, sleep and sleep regulation, behavioral challenges and much more. All parents attending the weekly sessions have had the screening done for their children and they are interested in learning more about their children's development.



Young moms and babies' top 10 issues at intake



Top five referral sources





pictured: Nami

NAMI'S STORY

Nami was pregnant at age 16.

Eighteen years later—after trials, failures and do-overs—she is a successful realtor.

When she realized she was pregnant, Nami hid it from her parents. She knew about Massey Centre as a friend was living here, and began herself to make arrangements with the intake worker. But soon her secret was out. A family friend had told her mom about the pregnancy, leaving her parents devastated she was asked to leave their home.

She continued with her plans, arriving at Massey Centre in 1997. Though her relationship with her parents was strained they maintained contact as Nami visited them during the weekends from time to time but they avoided speaking about the pregnancy. It was too difficult for them to deal with the situation at the time.

In January 1998 Nami gave birth to Azianna. She remembers only contacting her parents after returning to Massey Centre to let them

know she had given birth to their first grandchild. The weekend following the announcement Nami remembers her dad coming to pick her up to bring Azianna home for a visit. And it was love at first sight for them. An eventual reconciliation led to frequent visits, but her parents never spoke about her pregnancy until years later.

The baby's father was supportive, but abusive. Even after having another child soon after Azianna was born, Nami maintained her connection with him because she felt loved, but admits she was manipulated and her self-esteem damaged. They later broke up but he remains active in her daughter's life.

At Massey Centre, Nami received a lot of support from the residential counsellors, intake worker, and nurses. She learned parenting and independent living skills, she was recognized as high-functioning and independent in the Prenatal program, and skipped the usual Postnatal apartment step, moving directly to a townhouse. Six months later, she moved back

home. She felt she was not using Massey Centre resources and knew another young mom needed them more.

Nami had attended the Massey Centre Secondary School but left before she graduated, and took correspondence courses while caring for Azianna, but failed because it was hard to focus with a young child and no childcare.

She then got a job and worked as a hairdresser's assistant, then studied fashion merchandising. She became ill and withdrew from the program, but eventually, she completed a one-year Fashion Merchandising program, and transitioned to Business Administration Marketing, securing internships with major retailers and employment in the fashion industry for five years. Energized, she also completed the Youth Employment Service's Business Entrepreneurship program.

Five years ago Nami was recruited into real estate. She loves it and excels in it, buying her own first investment property just last year.

Although she admits to struggling with insecurities, she is ambitious to succeed. Daughter Azianna, meanwhile, is a first-year Law & Society student at York University.

Reflecting on her time at Massey Centre, Nami advises girls here to "take the help and use the resources offered. We are lucky to be in a place where these are available to us because being a young mom is hard. But you are not alone," she adds, "and you will succeed if you work hard and use the services to your advantage."

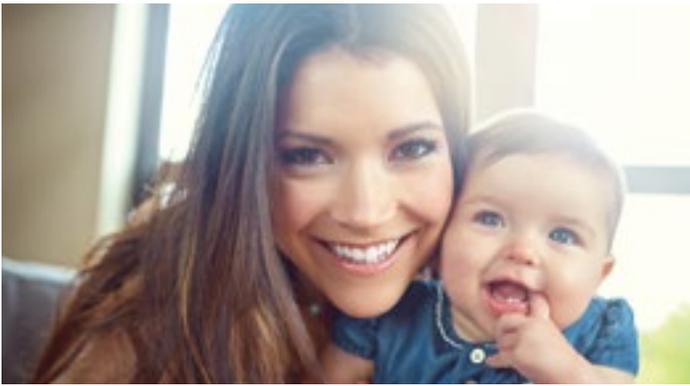
Nami has thought a lot about Massey Centre, and last year she started to give back. With some friends, she "adopted" a Massey Centre family, brightening their holiday season, and held an event that raised several hundred dollars for much needed gifts-in-kind items. Her group plans to support our young families again this holiday season.

"Thank you, Massey Centre," she says, "for continuing to be here 18 years later for young moms."



pictured: Azianna and Nami

"We are lucky to be in a place where these (resources) are available to us because being a young mom is hard. And you will succeed if you work hard and use the services to your advantage."



"For the past 18 months

I have been a parent relief volunteer at Massey Centre. My experience as a volunteer has been incredibly fulfilling.

In my role I spend a few hours, twice a week, offering parent relief to the young mothers. During this time I try to interact with the children in any way I can, talking to them or engaging them in physical activity. Depending on the age of the child, we play, sing songs, or sometimes they just eat and sleep.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role as a volunteer has been building relationships

with the young mothers Massey Centre supports. I'm always very grateful for the trust they place in me to be a support to them and their children.

Each week I never cease to be impressed by their commitment to being the best parents they can be. It has been a privilege to be a part of their journey. I look forward to continuing to support them alongside the amazing staff at Massey Centre.

A big thank you to the staff for being so supportive of me in my role as a volunteer."

Heather Blunn

"As a volunteer at Massey Centre, I have had the opportunity to provide parent relief for many of the young mothers. My role is to provide basic infant care allowing the mothers to take breaks and focus on completing things such as attending school and chores. I also provide parent relief for parents from the community while they attend the new Infant Parent Development Clinic.

Overall, my experience as a volunteer at Massey Centre has been amazing and irreplaceable.

As a recent University graduate who wanted to get more involved in the community, I'm very thankful that I discovered Massey Centre. This is because I've had the opportunity to meet such caring young women who strive to provide the best care for their babies regardless of the hardships they are going or have gone through. Also, my time interacting with the babies has been a great joy and learning experience."

Esther Adjei

VOLUNTEER STORIES



GIFTS WITH VISION

Looking for new and meaningful gifts?

The United Church of Canada has developed a giving catalogue with suggested gifts that support children and youth, education, poverty and hunger, rights relations, language revitalization and other programs in Canada and internationally.

Massey Centre is delighted to be one of the organizations featured in the 2016-2017 Gifts with Vision catalogue. You can select a gift for a loved one, a friend, a colleague—people who simply do not need more stuff.

“Very worthwhile and perfect for those who are hard to buy for.” – Gifts with Vision Donor

Help change a life. Visit
<https://www.giftswithvision.ca/project/stroller>
and give the gift of hope.



GET INVOLVED

Help Massey Centre continue providing support, treatment and other services for the vulnerable pregnant and parenting young moms, aged 13-25 and their babies living at the Centre or in the community.

You can:

- Make a donation today
- Become a **Best Start Monthly Giving** donor
- Host an event and designate the proceeds to Massey Centre
- Honour someone's special occasion or memory with a gift to Massey Centre
- Make a gift in your Will to Massey Centre
- Register, attend, and vote at the 2017 Annual General Meeting
- Tell others about the work of Massey Centre
- Volunteer and support the young moms and babies



DONATION FORM

YES! I want to help new young moms and their babies because they need me!

Here is my gift of: \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 I will give \$_____

YES! I will join the **Best Start** Monthly Giving Program* with my gift on the **last** day of each month of: \$10 \$20 \$25 \$50 I will give \$_____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Phone No. _____

Payment Options

I would like to give by: Cheque

My cheque payable to **Massey Centre** is enclosed.

Please charge my



Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____

Name exactly as shown on card: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Name for Acknowledgement Purposes (if applicable): _____

* I can revoke or change my authorization at any time in writing or by calling 416-425-6348 x 224, subject to providing 30 days' notice.

* I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to be reimbursed for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this Pre-authorization Debit (PAD) Agreement.

* To obtain a cancellation form, or for more information on my right to cancel a PAD Agreement or my recourse rights, I may contact my financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca.

Massey Centre protects your private information and complies with all legislative requirements. We will send you information from time to time. If you wish to limit, or not receive any correspondence in the future, please contact us at 416-425-6348 x 224.

Thank you for your support!



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