



CHILDREN'S  
COTTAGE  
SOCIETY



2010/ 11 Annual Report  
A year at a glance ...

# Values for life

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Page 2

## **KATHERINE AND BRANDON**

Page 3

## **HEALING BEGINS WITH SAFETY**

Crisis Nursery Page 4

## **WISDOM FOR TOMORROW**

Healthy Families Page 6

## **CHAMPIONING THE FAMILY**

Community Respite Page 8

## **TENACITY TO SUCCEED**

Brenda's House Page 10

## **COMPASSION IN ACTION**

Volunteer Programs Page 12

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Page 14

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT**

Page 15

## **WITH GRATITUDE**

Page 15



## VISION

*Safe children in healthy families.*

## MISSION

*Preventing harm and neglect to all children and strengthening families through crisis, respite and family support services.*

## SAFETY. WISDOM. FAMILY. TENACITY. COMPASSION.

With you by our side these values will flourish in the hearts of every family that we help.

**In 2010 we provided help to 1,636 families, including 2,770 children, providing respite, crisis care and family support.**

**This would not have been possible without the 819 volunteers, whom provided 10,454 hours of service and the 1,085 donors who donated over \$819,000.**

**Since 1986, we have cared for 50,531 children, thanks to YOU!**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Imagine yourself a parent – you have no one to help care for your children in a time of crisis; no one to support you to become the best parent you can be; and no one to keep your family together when homelessness strikes. These are the families who visit the Children’s Cottage, when a crisis strikes they find themselves without hope and nowhere to turn.

The Children’s Cottage Society exists to provide for children and to give these parents hope in times of crisis so that they can get back on their feet. The values of safety, wisdom, family, tenacity, and compassion have made a difference in the lives of 50,531 children in Calgary and the surrounding area over the past 24 years.

This past year has shown us that Calgary has become a large city with concerns for vulnerable families rising. Ever present is the need for a safety net to ensure that their children have a safe and healthy environment to grow up in. New trends have emerged showing more babies at risk of harm, and the Children’s Cottage has been called on more than ever before to help these vulnerable babies. This demand was the catalyst for us to set up a satellite crisis nursery in November ensuring their well-being. We were fortunate to locate a temporary facility in Southeast Calgary to provide these little ones with the support they needed. We are now in need of a new location and are developing a strategy to respond to the safety needs of babies and the support needs of parents.

As we work toward a plan we will consider the needs we see emerging for isolated, homeless families, and those in need of early intervention support. We will look for opportunities to ensure that what we develop will help our clients build strong and healthy families. To do this we will continue to need you by our side. The Children’s Cottage relies on the compassion and wisdom of our community. We look forward to your support to ensure that the work of the Children’s Cottage will continue to reach the infants, toddlers, and young children in our community who truly need our help to remain in a safe and healthy home.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our dedicated volunteers, donors, corporate partners, funders and employees for all you do for Calgary’s young children.

With sincere gratitude,



Rick Noonan  
President, Board of Directors



Patty Kilgallon  
Executive Director

## KATHERINE AND BRANDON

In 2008, we first met Katherine and Brandon, young parents to three year old Olivia. Katherine and Brandon started to use our Crisis Nursery when Olivia was first born. As new parents and new residents to Calgary they struggled with all of the demands put on them as first time parents . They didn't have anyone to turn to for support. As a result, they called upon the Cottage to help them through this new stressful time in their lives.

As a young couple with limited financial means, Katherine didn't have the ability to be a stay at home mom. She returned to the work force quickly but struggled with the fact that she couldn't be there for her daughter and often had guilty feelings. Katherine struggled with these feelings and wasn't making enough money to cover the high costs of day care, so she decided to leave her job to stay at home with Olivia. This left Brandon as the sole income earner. While they lived on a tight budget, the family was doing really well, and only called the Cottage when Katherine required back surgery, after slipping on ice. We were able to help them through this time, and were glad to see the family adjusting so well to their role as parents. They were doing great!

Just as things were looking up, they took a turn for the worse when Brandon found himself laid off from his job. Struggling to find a new one and to pay the bills, they suddenly found themselves evicted with no place to go. They called the Crisis Nursery to find space for Olivia, and that's when they learned about Brenda's House, our transitional shelter. Within a few short days, we were able to find them space at Brenda's House and get them on the road to being a healthy family again.

Katherine and Brandon, with our help, worked hard to find Brandon new job and affordable housing - with determination they were able to find both. During their stay, they learned about our Child Care Respite program. When they moved into new housing, we were able to help them find child care that would allow Katherine to return to work. Katherine and Brandon are now both employed in great jobs and doing so well as parents. They aren't struggling to make ends meet and can provide for all of Olivia's needs. Katherine calls often to let us know how they are doing, and to share her gratitude for the Children's Cottage. She tells us, that without our help and all of our wonderful programs working together, her family would not be together today.



healing  
begins with  
safety

(sāf 'tē)

Safety means security, an environment that's free from the threat of injury, harm or danger. Both children and adults have an instinctive need for safety: from our earliest moments, we all long to feel safe, secure and protected.

# THE CRISIS NURSERY

*Not even the best therapy can reach a child until he or she feels truly safe. That's why the Children's Cottage Crisis Nursery ensures that we protect every facet of a child's safety and well-being. We provide both the physical protection and the emotional security that is needed in what is often a stressful time in these young ones lives.*

*"Having a small amount of time to myself to just relax, and knowing that Abby was somewhere safe, allowed me to focus on being a better parent. It made me realize how much I truly do love my daughter and helped me reinforce my self worth. Even though I am parenting alone - I am a strong person and I can do this!"*

*~ Sharon*

*"I was so unbelievably stressed that I was worried that I might just snap. I would never intentionally hurt her, but I just needed a break so I could get my head on straight. The Children's Cottage cared for my daughter when I couldn't and they allowed me to de-stress and prepare to be a good parent again." ~ Maria*

## 2010 - 2011 Program Spotlight

- We made a difference in the lives of **1,206 children** and **660 families**.
- The average length of stay was **2.2 days**.
- **1,136 children** were turned away due to lack of resources.

### Family Profile

- **73%** of parents helped were parenting on their own.
- **70%** of mothers we helped were under the age of 30.
- **82%** of the families served are living below the poverty line.

### In 2010, we experienced successful outcomes!

- **94%** of families reported that the Children's Cottage services helped them resolve the problem that brought them to us.
- **93%** of parents reported that they strongly agreed their children were safe and well cared for during their stay.

## What's new at the Crisis Nursery?

In November 2010, the Children's Cottage with funding from Child and Family Service Authority, opened a second crisis nursery in the South East community of New Brighton. This facility offers 6 additional beds to the community for children 0 - 2 years old. We anticipate that we will be able to serve an additional 400 children a year with the opening of this second location.



**(wiz' dəm)**

Wisdom is defined as having superior insight and sound judgment, the result of both knowledge and experience. When we are wise, we “think on our feet” - making intuitive decisions and finding solutions that meet multiple needs.

**wisdom**

**for tomorrow**

## HEALTHY FAMILIES

*The Healthy Families program, helps parents to seek resourceful and innovative solutions for the problems that they sometimes encounter as parents. Our staff equip parents with the skills and wisdom to provide hope for a healthy future. We help parents be the best that they can be.*

*“It was really great just having someone that was so knowledgeable about babies and about services in Calgary. We are new parents and new to Calgary - this service has helped us be better parents.”  
~ Michelle*

*“I have learned that there is so much more to being a parent, and now I feel really confident in my abilities.” ~ Tricia*

*“This program has been amazing, I am new to Canada and I just felt so alone before. I don’t feel alone anymore.”  
~Prarthna*

### 2010 - 2011 Program Spotlight

- We served **890 children** from **503 families**.
- We provided **3,238 home visits**, a **15% increase** over the previous year.

#### Family Profile

- **43%** of parents have English as a second language.
- **45%** of families live under the poverty line.
- **86%** of families entered the program because they wanted to learn more about child development.

#### In 2010, we experienced successful outcomes!

- **63%** of families have increased knowledge about their child’s needs.
- **70%** of families report that they have increased knowledge and access to community resources.

## What’s new in the Healthy Families program?

The Healthy families program implemented a developmental screening tool - Ages and Stages. This tool will allow us to give an in-depth assessment of how a child is developing and will track any developmental concerns. Home visitors can also use this tool to model and promote optimal development and enhance parent child relationship strategies.

Our Healthy Families program expanded our service areas to include Taradale and Crescent Heights, due to an increase in demand.

# championing the family

(fam'əlē)

A family is a small intimately connected group who belong to each other. Whether traditional, or fashioned by choice. Families extend a safety net to all members forming the foundation for attachment, bonding, safety and trust that empowers each of us to thrive and reach our full potential.



# COMMUNITY RESPITE PROGRAM

*The Children's Cottage believes all children - regardless of age or circumstance - deserve a family. A stable, loving family environment that gives a child a chance to heal and flourish. Our Community Respite Programs help foster an environment where family bonds can grow and where families can stay strong together.*

*"It was a tremendous help for me. I have triplets and I feel like it's unfair to leave one person responsible for all 3 babies by themselves. Having a volunteer really allowed me to take a true break from the babies without feeling guilty."*

*~ Elizabeth*

*"Because of the child care respite program I was able to find housing and keep it, and find a job. I was also able to go to counselling and make my family better again." ~ Carly*

## 2010 - 2011 Program Spotlight

### In-home Infant Respite Program

- **173 children** from **138 families** received **4,110 hours** of respite.
- This is a **25% increase** over the previous year.
- **29%** of families had twins or triplets.
- **15%** of mothers suffered from post-partum depression.
- **97%** of parents stated they feel more prepared as a parent.

### Child Care Respite Program

- **146 children** from **102 families**, received **5,969 days** of respite.
- **56%** of families served were staying in a homeless shelter.
- **78%** of families reported that their stress decreased after using this program.

### Volunteer Day Care Program

- **104 children** from **71 families**, received **745 hours** of respite.
- **83%** of families are under the poverty line.
- **99%** of families feel ready to take care of their children after respite.

## What's new in the Community Respite Programs?

In September 2010, we introduced volunteers into our in-home infant respite program to be matched with our respite care workers whom have twins, triplets, or multiple children under the age of five. The pilot project has been a great success, with parents feeling better supported so that a true respite experience is achieved.

(tənas' i te )

Tenacity means never giving up. It is having the resolve and determination to keep going, regardless of barriers and obstacles that get in the way. It's the force that simply won't let us quit - no matter how hard the journey.

# tenacity

to  
succeed



# BRENDA'S HOUSE

*Tenacity is what continues to drive us forward at the Children's Cottage. With Brenda's House, our "never give-up" attitude is modeled on a daily basis. Despite hardships, mistakes and set backs - no matter what the obstacles are - we help our families reach goals and obtain successful outcomes.*

*"Brenda's House, not only provided us shelter, but so much more. When we came here we were exhausted emotionally, physically and spiritually. Through this program we found our own place in 3 weeks. We were given hope. We began to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We felt human again."  
~ Lorena*

*"When my family first arrived here, I thought my life was unlivable. But now I see a new beginning. I have a renewed sense of hope in myself and my family. Thank you." ~ Christian*

## 2010 - 2011 Program Spotlight

- We served **162 families - 226 adults** and **251 children**.
- The average length of stay was **31 days**.

### Family Profile

- **27%** of mothers staying with us were pregnant.
- **61%** of families were parenting on their own.
- **51%** of the families had previously stayed in a shelter.

### In 2010, we experienced successful outcomes!

- **74%** of families moved into market or subsidized housing and are no longer homeless.
- **11%** went onto second stage housing or to stay with family.

## What's new at Brenda's House?

This past year, Brenda's House adopted a new in house case management process, and each family has an in shelter 'key worker' that works intensively on an assigned case load. The key worker meets with each family 4-5 times a week to focus on housing goals and support them in accessing community resources and long term supports.

This year we also worked to increase volunteer support. This has ensured that staff can focus on helping families to stay on track and achieve goals.



# compassion

(kəm pash'ən)

in action

Compassion is mercy, the heartfelt desire to relieve the pain and suffering of others - a neighbour, a friend, a neglected child in the community. Arthur Ashe wrote - "From what we get, we can make a living; what we give however, makes a life."

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

*Offering compassion, the Children's Cottage volunteer team is comprised of many individuals and groups, who give a piece of themselves every day to ensure safe children in healthy families. They give until they have nothing left to give and then they give some more.*

*"I've experienced the deeply satisfying feeling of true trust that exists between women as mothers ' that another mother would entrust her precious children to my care. I've also enjoyed helping another mother through those overwhelming months of child care and seen her grow in confidence, competence and perspective" ~ Marilyn*

*"It's all about the kids, giving them a safe place where they can just be kids without all of the 'adult stuff' going on around them. Letting them be safe for a few days. That's why we do it." ~ Sylvia and Dennis*

### 2010 - 2011 Program Spotlight

#### Crisis Nursery

- **166 individuals** completed **4,938 hours** at our Crisis Nurseries.
- **23 corporations and groups** - made up of **245 people**, provided **1,017 hours** during one day volunteer projects.

#### Brenda's House

- **68 individual** volunteers, provided **1,297 hours** of service.
- **10 corporations and groups** - made up of **163 people**, provided **666 hours** during one day volunteer projects.

#### Community Respite Program

- **4 volunteers** provided **56 hours** of in-home infant respite care.
- **25 day cares** provided **104 days** of respite.

#### Administration and Events

- **148 people** provided **1,737 hours** of service.

## What's new in our Volunteer Programs?

Our volunteer support increased by 36% this year. Programs such as Brenda's House developed a volunteer strategy to help focus on improving child care and parent support. They also hosted its first volunteer run Bannerman Family Christmas Dinner, feeding and entertaining our residents. A new location for a Crisis Nursery was met with new volunteers ready to snuggle babies and our respite program initiated volunteer collaboration with staff in families' homes.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## A Message from our Treasurer.

*For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2011.*

This past year, the Children’s Cottage Society increased its reach to serve more children and families. We wish to thank the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority, the City of Calgary Family and Community Support Services, the United Way of Calgary, the Calgary Homeless Foundation, the Brenda Strafford Foundation, and the many donors who have invested in supporting Calgary’s vulnerable children and families. We are very grateful for your support and will continue to use your gifts effectively so that every dollar makes a difference.

Our revenues including investment income reached \$3.93M this year, reflecting a 7% increase from the prior year with a corresponding increase in expenses of 11% to \$3.89M. This increase is primarily related to the addition of a satellite crisis nursery that opened in November 2010. Salaries and benefits for our dedicated team of program staff continue to be our primary expenditure, comprising 79% of total expenses.

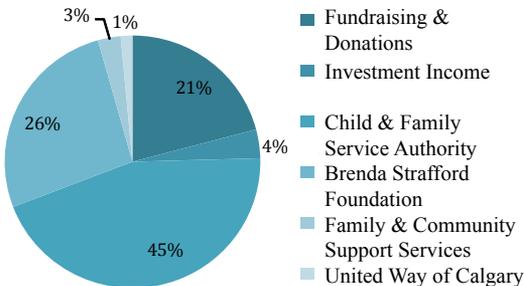
We were fiscally responsible in providing a wide range of programs for parents and children while incurring a modest net surplus of \$41K (\$154K in prior fiscal). As we look to the future, we will continue to manage our assets responsibly to ensure that the Society is well positioned to provide support to children and families in our community.

*Leslie Dang*

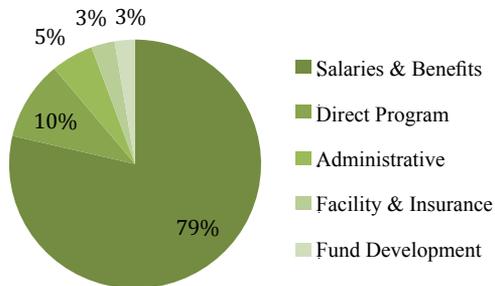
Leslie Dang, CA  
Treasurer, Board of Directors.

*A full version of our financial statements and accompanying notes are available on our website [www.childrencottage.ab.ca](http://www.childrencottage.ab.ca)*

### 2010/11 Operating Revenues (Total \$3,928,680)



### 2010/11 Operating Expenses (Total \$3,887,694)



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

This past year, we have made it one of our strategic priorities to communicate with the community at large on a more frequent basis. We hope to educate Calgarians about the problems of child abuse and neglect and ensure that all families who could benefit from our programs know how to reach us and what we can do to help.

## 2010/ 11 Spotlight

- We were featured in **46 media interviews** on television, radio and newspaper.
- We attended **14 fairs and trade shows** and participated in informational booths.
- We visited **71 corporations and organizations** to speak about the programs we offer.
- We toured **77 individuals and groups** through the Crisis Nursery and Brenda's House.
- We were involved with **9 student groups** for school based projects and had **8 students** participate in practicums.
- We signed up for social media sites and **tweeted 477** times to **268 followers** on Twitter and we made **116 friends** on Facebook.

## WITH GRATITUDE

The Children's Cottage extends our deepest thanks to every individual, business, foundation and group that made donations this past fiscal year. Large or small every gift you send directly benefits our work to help change the lives of children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected.

In 2010, we initiated our Circle of Hope - a special group of philanthropists who have made a long term commitment over \$10,000 a year to the Children's Cottage. The Circle members are united in their belief that every child and their family deserves 360 degrees of care. We are pleased to welcome these members to our circle;

The McWilliams Family  
CKLAS Foundation

Cenovus Energy Inc.  
Royal LePage Benchmark

Nexen Inc.

This year we received generous donations in memory of the following people; *John Dull, Ellen Elfner, Elizabeth Esau, Emily German, Mary Jane Hostetter, Gregory McCorquodale, Bernie Mutzbauer, Clara Priestnall, Therese Schuldermann, Susan Usselmann.*

# MANY THANKS

The Children's Cottage Society prides itself on running excellent programs for children and their families. We would not be able to do this without the generosity of the Calgary community - **thank you for your ongoing support.**

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*\*Due to space limitations only those who contributed over \$500 this past fiscal year are listed, but please be assured that each and every gift is appreciated. Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this list, if you discover any errors or omissions please call (403) 283-4200 ext. 225.*

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The Children's Cottage Society would like to thank  
our generous funders:



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BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES