



For pregnant and  
parenting youth

*two lives*

**Making a difference ~~one~~ life at a time**

**Annual Report 2015-2016**

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## Staff



Front row (left to right): Emily Torres, Program Coordinator; Kay Blakely, Bookkeeper.

Back row (left to right): Tanya Pereira, Operations Director; Gabrielle Palmer, Community Counsellor; Kimesha Thomas, Community Counsellor; Maria Reolin, Executive Director; and Susan Robins, Program Manager



# Vision

To achieve a community where youth can make a choice for life, even in undesirable circumstances, and where they will be accepted and supported; allowing positive outcomes for their children.



# Mission

Vita Centre is dedicated to excellent support, education and counselling for pregnant and parenting youth.



# Our Values



# President's Report 2015–2016

"To Pray is to let go and let God take over." Philippians 4:6-7

This year was a year of just that. I am pleased to report a year of wonderful change and growth for Vita Centre in many ways. We welcomed our new Executive Director Maria Reolin in June 2016 who together with her Management Team have already made a positive impact at Vita. The Board of Directors look forward to working together with Maria and the Management Team for the good of this agency.

A thank you to our stakeholders: funders, partners, members, clients, volunteers and staff of Vita Centre, without whose support throughout the past year would not have brought us to where we are today.

At Vita our clients are always at the forefront and because of this we recognize the contributions of our volunteers that reflect the values of this agency. This past year, volunteer participation at Vita increased volunteer hours from 9,987 last year to 10,114 this year. This is also reflected in our programs where we have increased our outreach by at least 100 more individuals and children. Well done to our volunteers and staff, without your efforts our programs would not be successful.

The staffs have been successful in using the client data base, Penelope, to support the growth in clients and keeping good track of reporting and data collection. This was possible through a grant by the Ontario Trillium Foundation last year.

Vita re-launched Me, My Baby, Our World last fall 2015 and continued to offer the March break camp with Harmony, delivering a 5 day arts-based program. This program combines equity training and arts development. The participants were able to think critically, establish positive peer relationships, gain an enhanced sense of self and learn respect for all forms of diversity. This program emphasized issues that relate to young women and mothers in the program.

This Arts Training program allowed participants an incredible experience by telling their story through a graphic novel. The outcome was a greater understanding of female identity, female empowerment, womanhood and /or motherhood.

We continue every year with our Diaper Drive and this past year 15 businesses participated and we were able to collect 277 packages and boxes of diapers; 262 packages and boxes of wipes along with several packages of formula, baby food, baby toiletries, baby clothes, women's toiletries and baby toys. This is an exciting achievement and it increased our wonderful stock in our care closet for our clients. Another opportunity to help out families in need, 77 families were sponsored last Christmas and this year we aim to reach more families to help them have a wonderful holiday.

If you come into our agency you will see a sign that says PACE - We continue to partner with Peel-Dufferin Catholic School Board where the young moms are completing secondary studies right at our premise and these students/moms are able to be with their child when needed and Vita offers childminding for the rest of the time. Continuing education is vital to these moms to ensure a wonderful future for them and their families.

## Board of Directors

Angie Girgis (President)

Pravin Rodrigues (Vice President)

Colin De Souza (Secretary and Treasurer)

Nicole Dehghan

Abhishek Krishnamoorthy

Abhishek Sharma (Resigned)

Sadeki Simpson (Resigned)

Deana DeGrace (Resigned)

Sania Mushir (Resigned)



# President's Report 2015–2016 cont'd

In the upcoming year Vita Centre will continue to offer excellent service to our clients. At the same time, Vita will continue to stabilize its foundation in order to build strong and build up. The agency will continue to diversify our funding sources through varied grants that will become available to the agency throughout the year in order to continue delivering high-quality and relevant programs for our clients.

I cannot thank the members of this Board enough for their relentless hours of volunteer engagement during this past year. We overcame and look forward to good things to come. Thank you to Board members for your specific gifts that you have brought to the table. We learned from each other and as a praying Board we have arrived to this night.

We say goodbye to four Board members at this AGM as their terms of office have come to an end and welcome new members. We look forward to 2016-17 Board members who will carry on the work for Vita Centre as we move ahead to good things coming.

**Angie Girgis, President / Board Chair**

Vita Centre



# Operations Director's Report

I would like to take this opportunity to offer words of thanks and recognition for the tremendous work accomplished by the Board of Directors, our volunteers, and our Partners. Most of all, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the staff of Vita Centre who work with such passion and dedication to ensure that our programs and services are successful at achieving our mission and vision.

This past year has been a transition year for Vita Centre with the departure of the Executive Director. I would like to thank our Board of Directors for putting their trust in me to lead this ship. I would also like to extend my thanks and gratitude to our Bookkeeper, Kay Blakely, whose financial acuity and support were a blessing during this time. I am happy to report that the absence of the Executive Director did not impact service delivery. In fact, I am proud to say that Susan Robins, our Program Manager, and her staff of Community Counsellors (Kimesha, Gabrielle, and Stephanie J) Program Coordinators (Emily and Nicolle) and Program Facilitator (Stephanie E) ensured that the quantity and quality of all Vita Centre programs and services was not compromised during this time.

Last Fall we successfully launched a new evidence-based program Nobody's Perfect and re-launched Me, My Baby, Our World, adding them to our program offerings. Nobody's Perfect is a parenting program for parents of children up to five years of age and is designed to meet the needs of parents who are young, single, isolated and have low income or little formal education. This program is designed to strengthen positive parenting skills. Me, My Baby, Our World (MMBOW) is an interactive program that explores the attachment relationship between parent and child through play sessions with children, scrap booking photos, collage work and discussion. This program is designed for young parents and their children (1–18 months).

On the fund development side, we ran two of our annual events this years—Trivia Night in March and Swing For Life Golf Tournament in June. Both events were successes in that we were able to reach new supporters while still putting on a fun event for our existing supporters. Thank you to all those who came out to these events to help us raise funds to support our mission. We have also been able to tap into new foundations who have provided monetary support for some of our programs over the past year. We will continue to mine new contacts and foundations while nurturing existing contacts over the next year.

Vita Centre could not operate without our members, hardworking volunteers and dedicated staff. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and thanks to our Board of Directors and all who support this great work. Lastly, I would like to welcome our new Executive Director, Maria Reolin, to the Vita family. Together I am sure that we will be able to take on new challenges continue to be successful at what we do.

Sincerely,  
**Tanya Pereira, Operations Director**



## Ways to give

Pregnant and parenting youth will often never seek help, assuming that there is none available to them or that they won't be able to afford it. At Vita Centre, we offer vulnerable and at-risk youth in Peel Region free access to counselling, programs, services and tangible supplies to assist them on their parenting journey.

We depend on community support, volunteers, friends and family to operate and assist us in meeting our mission and vision goals.

## We Make It Easy!

Every donation helps us provide a valuable service in Peel Region. These are just some of the ways through which you can help:

Donate online at [vitacentre.org](http://vitacentre.org) or [canadahelps.org](http://canadahelps.org)

Mail-in your donation to:

- Pledge
- Monthly Giving
- Annual Giving
- Planned Giving
- Event Sponsorships
- In-Kind Donations
- Third-Party Fundraising

For more information on ways to give visit [vitacentre.org](http://vitacentre.org) or call **905-502-7933**

101-75 Watline Avenue  
Mississauga, ON  
L4Z 3E5

Our volunteers are our most valuable resource and, without them, we couldn't do what we do!

Our volunteers come from all walks of life, some volunteer for a one-time special event, others make an ongoing commitment. We are always looking for:

- Committee members
- Help to organize and run special events
- Office support
- Child minding
- People to speak on behalf of Vita Centre in the community
- Guest speakers for programs
- Third Party Fundraisers and much more!

If you have a talent, we want to know about it!

If you are interested in donating some of your time or want more information please contact our Operations Director, Tanya at 905-502-7933 x 223  
[t.pereira@vitacentre.org](mailto:t.pereira@vitacentre.org)



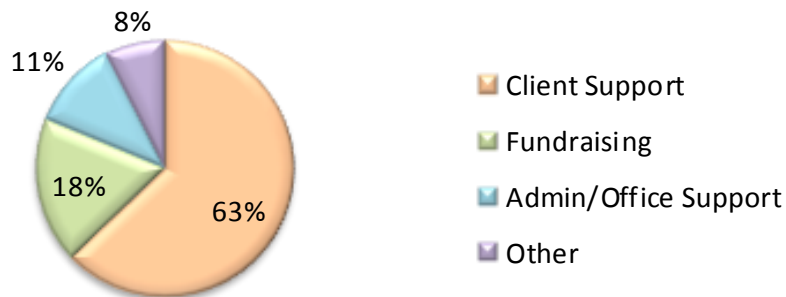
# Volunteers



We have amazing volunteers at Vita Centre and we want to take time to thank them for everything they do! We would not be able to do nearly as much for our clients without support from individuals and organizations that donate their time to us. This past year, Vita Centre benefited from the work of 278 who gave their time to help us achieve our mission. It is because of volunteers that Vita Centre remains a vibrant and successful part of Peel Region in support of pregnant and parenting youth.

This year, the volunteer hours contributed were over **10,114** hours from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, which is equivalent to **\$242,736** in salaried time (based on a rate of \$24/hour).

## Distribution of Volunteer Hours



# Days of Caring

During Days of Caring, 6-8 volunteers from local corporations in Peel come to the Vita Centre and offer their services to organize the donations received at the centre. This year **117** volunteers from **10** different corporations provided **617 hours** of their time to help us keep our Care Closet organized and tidy.

### A Huge Thank You to the Corporations Who Made a Difference this Year:

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Home Depot                             | Desjardins            |
| Suncor                                 | GE Canada             |
| Toronto Catholic District School Board | CIBC                  |
| St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School  | UPS                   |
| Toronto Police Rovers                  | United Way Volunteers |

Vita Centre would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to Home Depot for providing the funds and the man/woman-power to help us re-organize our care closet last summer





## One-to-One Counselling

Our one-to-one counselling program helps pregnant and parenting youth make positive decisions for themselves and their children. Counsellors support clients to identify goals, strategies and services to help improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.



Over the past year, **183 parents and 242 children** have been impacted by the Counselling program. Some of the feedback received indicated that:

- 95% reported having more positive connections and social supports
- 85% reported feeling less isolated or lonely
- 95% reported that they feel like they have someone they can turn to for help that they didn't have before
- 95% reported being more optimistic about their future
- 78% reported being able to better deal with emotional challenges

## Supper Connection

A program that provides the opportunity for young parents to come together and share a nutritious meal, engage in valuable parenting education learning opportunities and connect with peers. Sessions focus on information that help parents learn the skills and information they need to improve their food and nutritional choices, while reinforcing positive parenting strategies and enhancing parenting confidence.



This past year, Supper Connection has served **100 parents and 131 children**. At the end of each 12 week series, participants complete a survey which include performance measures that reflect the outcome goals of the program.

- 97% reported they have increased knowledge about healthy eating and strategies to access healthy food
- 87% reported they have improved social support or strengthened relationships to family and friends
- 85.5% reported they are eating healthier food more frequently since program participation

## Growing As Parents (G.A.P.)

G.A.P. is a parenting and life skills program offered to parents aged 15-30 years in the Region of Peel who have children 0-6 years of age. The primary goal of the program is to strengthen the relationship between parent and child by disseminating knowledge about relevant parenting and life skills topics



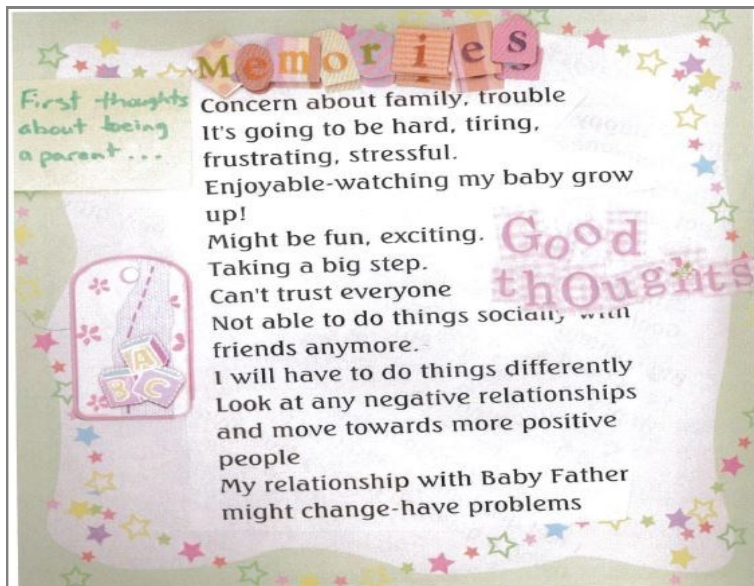
The G.A.P program has impacted the lives of **125 parents and 99 children** over the past year. At the end of each 12-week series, participants are asked to complete an evaluation which include participant ratings of performance measures for the goals of the program. These results indicate:

- 100% reported increased confidence in their parenting ability
- 96% reported an increase in parenting skills
- 100% reported an increased ability to use effective parenting strategies
- 100% of participants reported an overall increase in self-confidence

# Me, My Baby, Our World (MMBOW)

This program was re-launched in the Fall. MMBOW is an interactive program that explores the attachment relationship between parent and child through play sessions with children, scrap booking photos, collage work and discussion. MMBOW is a parenting group for young parents and their children 1–18 months.

Over the past year, **22 parents and 13 children**, have been impacted by this program. As a result of this program parents have indicated that they now feel:



# Nobody's Perfect

Nobody's Perfect is a parenting education and support program for parents of children from birth to age five. It is based on five easy-to-read, colourful booklets given to parents: Behaviour, Safety, Body, Mind, Parents

The program is designed to strengthen positive parenting skills while giving parents a safe place to meet others with children of the same age and with whom they share interests and concerns

Over the past year, **30 parents and 25 children**, have been impacted by this program. As a result of this program parents have indicated that they:

- Are aware of how children change as they learn and grow.
- Do things with and for their child to help him or her learn
- Know how to discipline their child without yelling, hitting or spanking
- Know how to keep their child safe and healthy
- Know how their relationship with their child impacts his or her development
- Have confidence in my parenting skills
- Are able to manage stress
- Know how to speak up for what my family and children need





## Care Closet

Registered\* clients of Vita Centre have access to our Care Closet, which provides necessities for newborns.



Examples of Care Closet items:

Baby toiletries: baby wash, baby lotion, baby powder, Vaseline, Q-Tips, diapers, etc.

Baby food: bottles, baby formula, jar food, baby cereal, etc.

Baby essentials: baby monitors, new infant clothing, diaper bags, crib sheets, etc.

Female toiletries: shampoo/conditioner, body wash, deodorant, etc.

Gift certificates for Walmart or grocery stores.



## Peel Parenting Collective

Peel Parenting Collective is a collaborative using a collective impact approach to use evidence and local context in Peel to identify priorities in the area of parenting education.

Our four-year project, funded by the Region of Peel is looking at developing regionally based indicators focusing on parental stress and developing tools to measure and support that need in the community with realistic and helpful supports and access to our community families.

As a result of this project, families will be healthy, parents will be supported and informed, and will have developed positive parenting skills, and healthy family relationships.

# THANK YOU!!

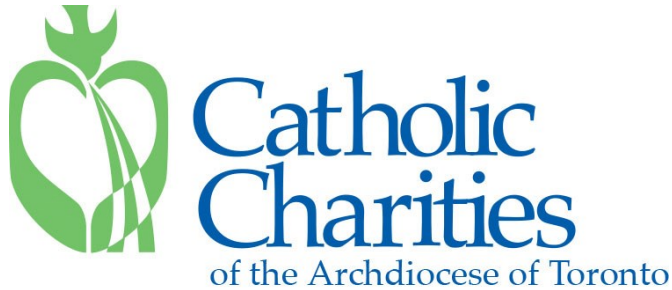
Our community partners are organizations and individuals that we work with to provide the best possible service to our clients.

They support us with program delivery collaborations, by providing program space, sharing in facilitating programs, donating other goods and services and much more.

Thanks to them we are able to provide our parenting programs out in the community where the clients need them most.



# Thank You To Our Funders



Vita Centre would like to thank the following foundations for their contributions towards our programs and services:

Arbonne Charitable Foundation—Angel's in Action Grant

Chum Charitable Foundation

Dewdney Foundation

F.K Morrow Foundation

Home Depot Canada

The Sifton Family Foundation

Volunteer MBC





# Thank You To Our Supporters

## VISIONARIES (\$5,000+)



- Regional Municipality of Peel
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese
- United Way of Peel Region
- Green Shield Canada
- Sifton Family Foundation
- Mississauga Community Foundation
- F.K. Morrow Foundation
- Dewdney Family Charitable Foundation
- Volunteer Mississauga Brampton Caledon

## GUARDIANS (\$1,000–\$4,999)

## COUNSELLORS (\$500–\$999)

- Ingram Micro Inc.
- Archbishop of Toronto
- Knights of Columbus—Credit Valley Council
- The Home Depot Canada Foundation
- Human Resources Development Canada
- Knights of Columbus—J.F.K. Council
- A Safe Self-Storage Facility (Halton) Inc
- Brampton and Caledon Area Community Foundation
- United Way of Peel Council
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Secondary School
- Insuranceland Inc.
- Knights of Columbus—Heart Lake Council
- Rotary Club of Brampton
- Prem & Annette Prabhu
- Al Oil Incorporated
- Anonymous
- Knights of Columbus—St. Maximillian Kolbe
- St Francis Xavier Secondary School
- Knights of Columbus—Our Lady of Peace Council
- Knights of Columbus—St. Christophers Council
- CHUM Charitable Foundation
- St. Francis Xavier CWL Council
- Anonymous

- Stephen Harvey
- Rotary Club of Mississauga - Meadowvale
- The Corporation of the City of Brampton
- Cordi Bakery
- Cindy McGoldrick
- Bradley Butt
- Aaron Cryderman
- Gursharan Singh
- Joseph Nip
- Amalgamated Transit Union Local 113
- David Bedini
- James Strathdee
- Nick Milanetti
- Norman and Florence Benn
- GHET Holdings Ltd - M&M Meat Shop Council Ring
- Angelic Treasures Christian Childcare Centre
- Ryan Seeriram
- AstraZeneca Canada Inc
- De Lage Landen Financial Services Canada Inc.
- Meridian Credit Union - Clarkson Branch
- Grocery Foundation

## AMBASSADORS (\$100–\$499)

- . United Way of Greater Toronto
- . Samantha Angel Incubate Institute
- . Jim Wilson
- . St. Mary's CWL
- . Deana DeGrace
- . Calvary Worship Centre
- . Angie Girgis
- . Ontario Power Generation Employee & Pensioners Charity Trust
- . Trivia Night Raffle Sales
- . Knights of Columbus—John Paul II Council
- . Carmel Attard
- . Goodman & Griffin
- . Lynda Nahirniak
- . Michael McGinnis
- . Peek A Boo Child Care Centres
- . Linda Plati
- . Telus - Team Telus Cares
- . Uncharted Software Inc
- . Menko Den Ouden
- . Ron Starr
- . St. Martin of Tours Parish
- . BLD Covenant Community
- . Fenix Parks Canada Inc.
- . Judy Wityszyn
- . Sandbox Software Inc
- . Karen and Jeff Trudeau
- . Jacqueline Leal
- . Andrea and Paul Tjioe
- . Melissa Thomson
- . Hydro One Employees & Pensioner's Charity Trust Fund
- . United Way of York Region
- . R.B.S. Networking Inc.
- . Benedict De Castro
- . Oluranti Okanlawon
- . Nelly Yanwen Gong
- . Leslie and Lesley Lundrigan
- . Ivan Prytkov
- . Gary Fisher
- . Irene Violette
- . Alouise Henderson
- . Christina Gauthier
- . Victor & Susie Pereira
- . Rafal Raczka
- . Sandra Christiano
- . Parallel Realty Inc
- . Pat Saito
- . U Fly Simulator Inc
- . Ilya Zatolokin
- . Michael McAuliffe
- . Jeff Morgan
- . Joe Sequin
- . Phillipe Renouf
- . Karen Ras
- . Investors Group
- . Eric Parla
- . Peter Evans
- . Craig Ballard
- . Melanie Nazareth
- . George Carlson
- . Chris Fonseca
- . Carol Pitcher
- . Jolene Leon
- . Nativity of Our Lord CWL
- . CUPE Local 2026
- . Dr. Anilkumar Menon Medicine Professional Corporation
- . St. Joseph's CWL
- . Canadian Council of Construction Unions
- . Lori Therault
- . Tanya Pereira



## FRIENDS (\$25–\$99)

- Irwinjit Kapoor
- Ann Marie Lloyd
- Ivanka Kabranova
- Diane Myers
- Norma Tabula
- Helen Callery
- Nicole Dehghan
- Chris Cade
- Kathleen Ancker
- Maria Natalia Cordeiro
- Clara Wai Yee Au
- Blanche Monteiro
- St. John Fisher CWL
- Alexei Fox
- Sadeki Simpson
- Sally Amaral
- St. Anne's RC Church CWL
- Peter Sekenda
- Costco Wholesale
- Tamara Ray
- Frank Medoro
- Merciful Redeemer Parish
- Ron Thompson
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- Ed Tetz
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- Karen McCarthy
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- William Hurley
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