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Kids Can Fly Annual Report 2019-2020

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Kids Can Fly– Early Child Development & Parent Support/ Incorporation # 156380 March 2003

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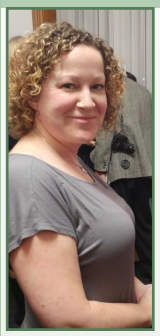
Para/MIM/Launch Pad
Alicia Moffat
Imagination Library

Report from the Co Chairs—Richard Cook and Sarah Disher-Neddow



Kids Can Fly enjoyed another successful year in 2019-2020. Our programs continued to reach out and support children, parents and families in our community.

The Board of Directors would like to thank our Executive Director Sharon Brooks for her continuing dedication, hard work and enthusiasm for all that Kids Can Fly does and for the opportunities that are possible for our agency. Likewise, we wish to thank all our program staff and our many volunteers for their commitment to our programs and vision. Each of you contribute in unique and various ways, and our agency would be the poorer without your involvement. My Co-Chair Sarah and I would like to thank our fellow Board members for their work, both in Board and committee meetings and in volunteering their time and talents to our programs and fund-raising projects. To paraphrase, many good hands make significant good works. Our community is better for all that each of you has contributed.

We also thank our many sponsors and supporters, without whom Kids Can Fly would not be able to carry on its programs. The reality of our society is that it takes funding to provide resources and materials to the people we seek to serve, and this would not be possible without the generosity, caring and commitment of everyone who keeps supporting this agency financially and step forward in times of need. You are our partners in the good work we seek to do with children and families.

As this last fiscal year was coming to an end, we all were becoming aware that previously unthought-of changes were being forced upon our society, and the world at large, by the coronavirus epidemic. As I write this, I am aware, in reflection, of just how much this virus and the efforts to contain it are and will continue to affect our agency during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. There will be a greater need for creativity, hard decisions and changes, and new ideas and supports to continue the good work that has been done over the past years. However, Kids Can Fly has always been blessed with community-minded, positive-spirited and strongly dedicated people who support its endeavors and continued success. Although some may see the current events as difficulties, let us view them more as opportunities to create new solutions and new ways to serve our community.

Respectfully Submitted Richard Cook on behalf of Sarah Disher –Neddow

Executive Director's Report submitted by Sharon Brooks

It has been my privilege to lead Kids Can Fly since 2001. Starting out at a time when early learning was not as respected, it was my job to secure support for its value to society. Happily, the importance of early learning is now generally understood. Kids Can Fly has secured a respected reputation which draws passionate volunteers, sponsors and supporters to continue our work. We remain true to our philosophy that the first 6 years set the trajectory for a child's life and that parents are the most important influence. How we deliver programming is fluid—working at filling gaps and doubling down on what we believe is most important. Thank you to our board members, dedicated staff, generous volunteers and supporters without whom this would not be possible. ***Respectfully Sharon Brooks ED***

The Launch Pad: Changing Lives!

Located at Graham Bell Victoria School, offered drop in classes for families, caregivers and children ages newborn to 4 years old on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday mornings from 9:00 to 12:00 AM each week. Community caregivers including informal and Wee Watch services participated weekly. Some families arrived right at 9:00 AM when we opened , others rushed in just in time for music and story time. The relaxed and caring atmosphere made everyone welcome regardless if they were a grandparent, mom, dad, non-custodial parent or caregiver.

This year we supported both a family with a hearing-impaired parent and a family of a hearing-impaired child. Both families were patient and taught us a lot about how to make their experience at Launch Pad inclusive, fun and supportive. This past year we also hosted and supervised a high school field placement from Tolgate Technological Skills Centre as well as an Early Childhood Education field placement from Mohawk College.

Launch Pad is promoted on the Kids Can Fly website, Facebook page and in its own Launch Pad Facebook group.

Each morning families sign in when they arrive. We averaged 15 participants each day (includes adult and children). Over this past year approximately 8 grandparents attended the program and 11 community caregivers. Moms and dads regularly attended Launch Pad

This past winter, we completed a satisfaction survey (20 participants) The results included that: most participants travelled a short drive to LP, 2 walked

Regarding quality of staff, all 20 participants rated a "5" the highest score which indicated exceptional.

Regarding overall experience, all 20 participants rated a "5" highest score (exceptional)

The responses were overwhelmingly "yes" in regards to the child and parent experience, including personal connections between staff and other parents, feeling welcome, and importance of Launch Pad to them as a parent. The questionnaire also indicated that 10 families came once a week, 6 came several times a week, and 4 came several times a month. Some families indicated they have accessed a number of programs offered by Kids Can Fly.

Respectfully Submitted JANE FLINDERS RECEC

2019 ECE Banquet THEME: THE 80's

2019 ECE Committee Members : Katrina Macri, Brooke Thompson, Diane Bartle, Paula Roy, Jennifer Dawson, Karleigh Lichota, Ashley Porter, Melissa Lis Erin Rooney, Sharon Brooks and Heather Wilson

The 2019 ECE Banquet was super fun with an 80's THEME. The sold-out crowd dressed up and participated in the games and activities. We welcomed Conestoga College as a NEW supporter as well as adding some new members to our planning committee. The awards were all well received and Kids Can Fly was proud to create the **Donn Zver LOVE OF LITERACY** award to honour his ongoing support of Imagination Library. Mieke Schroeder was the winner, noting her work with Strong Start. Donn also was the keynote speaker, reflecting on his personal life and the importance of literacy for young children.

Storybook Breakfast

The 2020 Theme was

SEUSS

and it was amazing!

We raised $27000

thanks to our sponsors,

volunteers and guests!

2019-2020 Financial Report

The 2019-2020 fiscal ended with an excess of revenue over expenses of $5,533 and a bank balance of $241,021. Sincere heartfelt appreciation goes out to all of our funders and volunteers whose efforts and support allowed Kids Can Fly to generate over $198,548 of free programs to the community.

Financial Highlights	
Total Revenue for the year ended March 31, 2020	$264,834
Total Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2020	$259,301
Program Revenue	56.7%
Direct Program Expenses	68.4%
Operating Expenses (excluding Public Education)	22.9%

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Adkins
Treasurer

For additional information contact Terry Adkins terry_adkins@hotmail,com

Mothers in Mind®
POWERED BY THE MINDS AT CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Kids can fly

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Submitted By Jane Flinders.
Mothers in Mind is a 10 week registered program that Kids Can Fly and Nova Vita partner to offer to moms and children ages 1 month to 3 years. Each week two facilitators meet in the Launch Pad room for play and gentle discussion. There is a different topic presented that encourage attachment between parent and child. Through a trauma-informed lens, moms can discuss how their parenting journey is impacted by their own past hurtful experiences. We were able to offer a spring 10 week session in 2019 with 7 participants. In the fall we offered two drop-in sessions which provided not only new and potentially interested moms but invited past moms to check in with us. Another Mothers in Mind 10 week session was offered in the spring of 2020 wrapping up mid March with 5 participants.
This program supports a small but needy target group and we are proud to be involved with it

WRAPAROUND SUCCESS

"Many of the families that I serve through Kids Can Fly attend or access almost all the programs provided, including Imagination Library, prenatal classes, Parachute Program, Launch Pad and Mothers in Mind. I am so proud and grateful to be part of this organization that honours and puts developing healthy families in our community at such a high priority. " *Jane Flinders RECEC*

Kids Can Fly has followed the vision of the work of the late Dr Fraser Mustard—that a baby's brain is 20% developed at birth and their experiences—or lack thereof - during the first 6 years of life will determine their health, life and school success. Dr Mustard was adamant that parenting was the key to the child's success and advocated for programs like the Launch Pad where parents learn by doing. We are proud to have the flexibility and talented staff to be able to act on local gaps and needs and work towards filling them with specialized supports for parents—thus doing the best possible for the children of our community!
Sharon Brook ED Kids Can Fly.

Peer to peer support for moms with infants under 12 months experiencing some challenges

Parents and babies continued to meet once a week at TB Costain Community Centre in the rooms donated by Followers of Christ Church. Each mom and baby is greeted when they arrive and once participants have settled in, we begin our class with welcome songs that include the baby's names. For the next 30 minutes we bounce , sing and dance with the babies and moms. There are a lot of smiles, hand-clapping and bell-ringing. At 1:30 PM, our dedicated and loving baby-cuddlers descend on the room to allow the moms to leave and enjoy a cup of tea, discuss important topics to new moms, and develop what has become for many past participants life-long friendships. Woven into each week is discussion on how each mom is doing, knowing that many of them attend each week because they are struggling in their new role as a mom. The relaxing couches and warm acceptance are a safe place to express the big and sometimes hard feelings that moms are experiencing.

On average, we have 6 moms attend each week. A total of nine moms completed the satisfaction survey this past winter. The responses were overwhelming positive and referred to benefits to them as well as their babies, including comments such as: learning from other moms "big time"; and 'I would encourage other moms to attend " absolutely". **Respectfully submitted by Jane Flinders RECEC**

The CBT Research Study in partnership with Dr Ryan Van LieShout and McMaster University continues with excellent results.

The program concept is having women who have recovered from PPD deliver Cognitive Behavioural therapy to moms currently dealing with it.

An additional grant of $98500. from the Brain Institute was approved in March and we have been able to train additional facilitators, plus these funds will allow us to continue the research for 2 more years. Kids Can Fly is the named lead on this grant, so we have now hired Robin Brennan as the Community Grant Assistant to encourage participants and work on the study. Results are very positive for both mom and baby.

Submitted by Sharon Brooks Executive Director.

Roots of Empathy

submitted by Sharon Brooks.

Kids Can Fly has been hosting the Roots of Empathy program within Brantford Brant since 2003.

More than 15000 elementary school children—from both boards– have benefitted from this preventative model. Research shows that 88% of children become more empathic, tolerant and less aggressive after participating. Bullying and especially cyber-bullying are real problems and Roots of Empathy is a preventative approach to help children make good decisions and think about the impact of their behaviour on others.

For the second year in a row, we were unable to train new instructors due to Government funding cuts. Therefore our program numbers have shrunk as we lose instructors to attrition. We are maintaining about 40 programs and are grateful to our volunteer instructors and families who share their precious babies in the classroom. www.rootsofempathy.org

"…*respect for oneself, understanding and compassion for others, and a sense of responsibility for the world, its citizens and its future."* Mary Gordon

Mayor Bailey of the County of Brant presented us with a cheque for $20000 to help provide Imagination Library Books to children living in the County! Receiving the cheque are Sharon Brooks ED and Leslie Downie Imagination Library Committee Chair.

We were the charity of choice for the Michelle Wright Concert in Dec 2019
A great team-building effort!

Movie Marathon was a HUGE success raising $15000 It was held in the Fall instead of the Spring this year

Lots of fun for families at the Launch Pad observing Holidays as we also held our first MOM TO MOM toy exchange at TB Costain. Thanks to Jane Flinders and Terry Adkins, SPONSOR

The imagination Library Committee grew in numbers and was able to raise significant funding to maintain and grow this important program. We are very fortunate to have **Jeanne Smitiuch** as part of our local group as she is also the Canadian Director of the Dollywood Foundation. In June 2019, Jeanne, Alicia Moffat, Leslie Downie and Sharon Brooks traveled to the International conference in Tennessee where they were inspired with ideas and new research on the benefits of this amazing program!

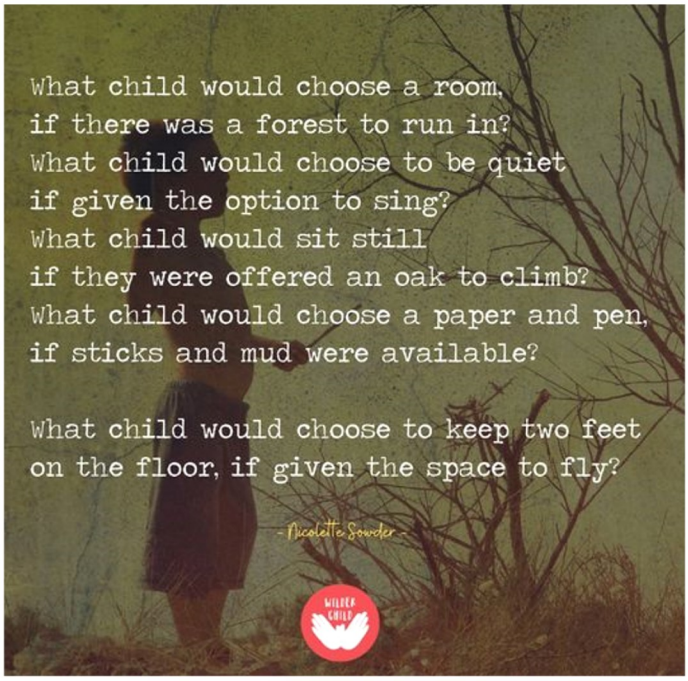
We were very grateful to receive $10000 once again from the Rotary Club of Brantford SUNRISE for Imagination Library which supports 200 children

Prenatal Program

With funding from the Aberdeen Foundation we continued to offer this 6 week course which is geared to women who may be at a higher risk to develop a PPMD. The curriculum was developed by our staff and helps to create a team approach; to know what to expect and where to seek support. The free series includes supper and has been well received. **Jane Flinders & Alicia Moffat, Facilitators**

Donn Zver again hosted a **Royal Tea** in support of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in his beautiful gardens. The guests enjoyed perfect weather, delicious food, tea and champagne, as well as a visit from Her Royal Majesty, Bag Pipers and a Silent Auction

$10000 was raised. Thanks Donn, donors and volunteers



Dolly made a few appearances over the holidays and helped promote the sale of the Donn Zver Christmas ornament which was a Gingerbread boy! We raised over $8000. This popular item is becoming a collector piece!

Our 2nd Peppermint Mouse Christmas Market was bigger and better, and raised over $3500 for Imagination Library

Thanks to all who helped!

Our **Super Hero Event** was held on Labour Day again. Thanks to Dairee Delite, Police, Fire and Paramedic Services , Megs & Clarke, and Whimsical Players we raised over $5000. for Kids Can Fly.

We added some games of chance in addition to the BBQ and Ice Cream sales.. Over 1000 people came out to enjoy this lasts event before school starts.

Simple. Effective.

Homecomin' Conference in Tennessee June 2019

Kids Can Fly works to builds a foundation for reading and learning through providing books from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Our commitment is to enroll children, promote the program, and raise $50.00 per child each year which results in a significant and positive change. The Dollywood Foundation manages the selection and distribution of books.

Alicia Moffat Imagination Library Coordinator

2019 Christmas Ornament

"We all get excited when a new book arrives in the mail and look forward to finding out what it's all about that evening. This program has brought us a lot of joy and I have really learned how to better engage my children with the parental before/after reading tips that are included in several books we have received.." *parent quote*

All of Brantford/Brant County benefits from increased literacy rates by:

- Higher quality of life
- Improved health and education outcomes
- Ultimately a stronger workforce.

Brantford and Brant County is serving as a model for other communities in Ontario who are establishing programs .

We are thankful this year for all of the community partners who have provided sponsorship of books for our community and the families who we get feedback from on how much they love this program!

This program is made available to families at NO cost thanks to so many wonderful donors, including Donn Zver, SC Johnson, Brant Community Foundation, Rotary Club of Brantford Sunrise, Rotary Club of Brantford, City of Brantford, County of Brant and MANY of other private individual donors.

Live performance by Dollywood Players in Paris May 2019

140549

Books have been sent to children in Brantford/Brant since the program started here in 2010

24117

Books were mailed from April 2019 to March 31, 2020

1875

Brantford/Brant Children enrolled in the program

2628

have graduated.

25%

Of all children under 5 living in Brantford/Brant County are enrolled in the program as of March 31, 2020