



Spring 2010 Newsletter

A Tree Growing with Change

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International Women's Day (March 8th) is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.

December 6, 2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the "Dec 6th massacre" that took place in Montreal – where the lives of 14 young women were lost. Memorials were held to mark this tragic event, as well reflect on where we are as a society in terms of ending violence against women and working towards equity.

If we believe women matter and see the need to advocate for rights and opportunities, then we need to share our voices with others.

One way South Riverdale CHC is celebrating International Women's Day is by getting people to talk about the issue. The Tree of Change is an

opportunity for community members, staff, and student's to express their view and pledge to make a difference.

The tree is on the second floor; already many messages have been shared. Four symbols can be found on the tree.



The heart– Giving your time to an organization/ a cause or making a donation.



The foot-Personal change. The change can be in self awareness in terms of your thoughts, actions and beliefs.



The hand– supporting a person or actively being involved.



The acorn-Change for the future. This can take the form in change of policies, laws and attitudes.

The voices at South Riverdale have already made pledges to:

- Give time to the community
- Give support to less fortunate people
- Give financial support
- Do volunteer work in a community centre or school

To have your say, please visit the health centre and come to the second floor and make your pledge.

✦ *Gurpreet Karir, Health Promoter*

SAVE THE DATE!

Deadline for Board of Directors Application:
March 31/10

Earth Day - Living Green In the City:

Thursday April 22/10
from 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Annual General Meeting

June 23/10. For more information, call **Ruth at (416) 461-3577 ext. 223.**

Welfare in Ontario Doesn't Add Up: Do The Math

On December 4, members of SRCHCs' **Health and Strength Action Group**, along with community members and local organizations, participated in a strategy day hosted by Hamilton's "Put Food in the Budget" group. The campaign is working with people across the province to increase social assistance by \$100 and ensure that everyone receiving social assistance can afford to eat healthy food.

At the event, we talked about the government's collection and spending of our tax dollars. The group agreed that government priorities should be to increase income supports, build affordable housing, invest in health promotion and increase the minimum wage.

We heard personal stories from people who struggle to survive with current social assistance rates; they are leading Put Food in the Budget campaigns in their own communities. One speaker compared what he could afford to eat in a week to a display of a

week's worth of food according to Public Health's Nutritious Food Basket. He can only afford healthy food choices for 1½ weeks per month, relying on food banks the rest of the month.



Chris Mackie (Hamilton's Associate Medical Officer of Health) spoke about the research evidence linking nutrition to health, and poverty to poor health. His message echoes the call by David McKeown (Toronto's Medical Officer of Health) on the provincial government to ensure that all Ontarians have access to safe, nutritional food.

Although the Ontario government has a Poverty Reduction Strategy, social assistance rates have not been raised to cover the cost of healthy food. Both Medical Officers of Health support the call for an extra \$100 Healthy Food Supplement.

Michael Patterson, Executive Officer, Diocese of Niagara, Anglican Church of Canada spoke about why charity is not the answer, including food banks. Although many people agree that

WHAT'S UP WITH NAAQ?

(Neighbourhood Action on Air Quality)

- Learn about trees, tree identification, how trees impact the environment and our health, and how to support their good health, too.
- Take steps to measure what's in our air
- Learn ways to connect with your neighbours and local businesses around environmental action
- Share ideas and teach others about what we can do as a community
- Join the NAAQ Community Advisory Committee
- Visit us at movie nights (**March 3, 7pm!**), community events, and the SRCHC Earth Day Open House (**April 22**)

For more information contact **Peg, ext. 268, or plahn@srhc.com**

Cont. Do the Math

food banks are a survival necessity, they prevent the government from addressing the real problem of inadequate social assistance.

The 100+ conference participants debated strategies for real change. Many good ideas were proposed: Look for high profile persons (e.g. media, sports) to champion the cause; participate in the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition's Social Audit; develop a panel to travel through the province for community hearings, releasing their report at a Queen's Park demonstration in May. As well, we will continue to build support for the campaign by connecting with health, faith, labour, youth and educational organizations.

All of us want action. Decision-makers need

to listen to the evidence. We left this event feeling powerful and excited because we know we are part of a bigger campaign driven by the anger, sadness, lived experience, energy, ideas, momentum and hope of the people we met in Hamilton and others across the province who want to win this demand.

We encourage you to visit www.dothemath.thestop.org. The campaign wants 6,000 people to complete the survey by April 2010 so, please, Do The Math!

- ✦ *Terry Ellis, H.S.A.G Community Member*
- ✦ *Sheila Cram, H.S.A.G Community Member*

For more information contact
Susan, ext. 353

Part of the awareness campaign is the "Do the Math (DTM) tool". DTM is a survey which asks people to make up a monthly budget for a single person and compares it to those on social assistance. Communities organized DTM teams who visited 27 MPPs and invited them to "Do the Math". As of December 2009, 14 MPPs had completed the DTM budget calculation. Correction from Previous issue: "The maximum payable by Welfare (OW) is \$572 and by Disability (ODSP) is \$1,020, at most only giving \$1,592 to live off." Sentence should read: "The maximum payable by Welfare (OW) is \$572 and by Disability (ODSP) is \$1,020."

Join in the fun of SRCHC's Earth Day: Living Green In The City

Thursday April 22, 2010

3:30-5:00 p.m.

FREE

**Community Meal
from 3:30 until
supplies last**





From the Board

At our November and December meetings, the Board continued with its regular work. The Nominations Committee and the Community Grants task group are now under way. In January, Jason Altenburg, Manager of the Urban Health Team, introduced the members of the team and outlined their work plans. This staff grouping focuses most of its energy on people who face barriers in accessing health care. They may be without health cards, homeless, or living in shelters. The Board continues to be impressed with the health benefits to clients and the community from their harm reduction program and hepatitis C project.

Quality was the word of the day at the Board's Annual retreat in January. The Local Health Integrated Networks now require community health centres,

hospitals and other participating organizations to develop processes by which they can measure the quality of their performance. The Toronto Central LHIN will be particularly asking us for accountability in their five priority areas:

1. Reduce emergency room wait time.
2. Reduce the number of alternative care days (i.e. long term care).
3. Improve the prevention, management and treatment of diabetes.
4. Improve the prevention, management and treatment of mental illness and addiction.
5. Improve the value and affordability of health care services.

What a challenge! The first two priorities apply to hospitals. The next two apply to CHCs' and are

very important to our community. SRCHC will be working to refine the reporting processes to show that we are expanding our outreach into the community and refining our assessment and care of patients who are at risk of diabetes and mental illness and addiction. The Centre may question the fifth priority for example, is it an improvement for a doctor to see four patients in an hour rather than one person with multiple health issues? We will also ask where the other health concerns of our community fit in.

The Board recognizes that it is accountable for the quality of service provided. So during this year we will strive to increase our knowledge of quality assessment and if necessary, engage in conversation with the Toronto Central LHIN.

✦ *Yvonne Stewart, Board Member*

Say Hello to Our Staff



Jorie Morrow has been a part of the SRCHC team for 6 years. Some communities Jorie has served in the past include, the developmentally challenged and dual diagnosed population, abused women in the shelter system, developing self-help mutual aide support groups, Manager of the Family Caregiver Support Network, and St. Joseph's Health Centre. At SRCHC she provides social work services, facilitates groups and presents occasionally. Jorie enjoys spending her spare time with her family and pursuing select hobbies. She is a strong participant and passionate advocate for the arts here in Toronto.



Lori Sutton is extremely happy to have joined SRCHC, as a full-time Registered Dietitian on the DECNET team. She had previously worked for Parkdale Community Health Centre, St. Michael's Hospital & Hamilton General Hospital. Her education includes a Bachelor of Applied Science in Food and Nutrition (Ryerson University), a Dietetic Internship (St. Michael's Hospital) and a Bachelor of Physical Education (McMaster University).