



Ontario's Community Health Centres



Earth Day at South Riverdale Community Health Centre

Inside this issue:

Healthy Bones	2
Working at Decreasing Air Pollution	2-3
From The Board	4
New Board	4

Catherine Perez first came to the SRCHC open house/earth day event with her daughter, Madelina's class to the dramatic Garbage Tales presentation by Margaret Chang (from Toronto's Waste Management program). She was so captivated by what she saw that, after school, she gathered up her other two children and her neighbours, the Gangadeen family, and returned. For the next two and a half hours, they toured the many displays, demonstrations and activities.

They created recycled art. They potted take home seedlings of herbs and tomatoes, provided by the Riverdale Food Working group and SRCHC. After watching a cooking demonstration by SRCHC staff, the two families sat around a table together to enjoy free hamburgers, hot dogs, samosas, fruit and vegetables while listening to the lively music of Maria from the Raging Grannies. They all crossed their fingers and hoped to win one of the impressive raffle prizes, listening for their names in the English and Cantonese announcements of the draws.

Since her focus was on Earth Day,

Catherine made sure her family saw the displays on: The Way to Clean Air, Solar Energy, Energy Conservation, The Good Food Box (containing local food), and bike repair. This was her first visit to SRCHC, as well as participating in a tour of the building, she also took an interest in the display boards about the diabetes program, chiropody, Early Years Jump Start Program, Counterfit, Plain

Language Group, Senior's Wellness, Tai Chi - and they all had a good look at the flexible spine at the chiropractor's booth.

Staff and Board members spent weeks planning this well attended (despite the

cloudy, showery weather) Earth Day/ Open House event. If every family or individual who attended this event participated as fully as the Perez and the Gangadeen families, they would have met SRCHC and partner agencies' staff and volunteers, seen the scope of SRCHC programs and services and the benefit to the community, - and in Madelina's words, "learned to recycle and make less waste."



Attention Members

Would you like to be part of a new Editorial Board for this newsletter? Contribute your ideas about what goes into the newsletter, what it looks like and how the newsletter can connect people to each other and to the health centre. For information, call Susan at (416) 461-1925 ext. 353 or e-mail: sbender@srhc.com
Editors: Sara Tryon & Debby Yuke

Healthy Bones for Life - Annie Chung-Hui & Julie Wong

One in 4 women and at least one in 8 men over the age of 50 suffers from osteoporosis. Osteoporosis has been called the “silent killer” because there are no signs and symptoms and is often diagnosed



Julie Wong

after a fracture. Fractures, especially hip fractures, can affect a person’s quality of life. Fractures are also a huge cost to the healthcare system. Even though the risk is higher for older people, osteoporosis can happen to anyone at any age.

In January 2008, SRCHC piloted a new program called Bones for Life in partnership with Osteoporosis Canada. The purpose is to promote bone health and reduce falls of people in the community. The program design includes education, and skills building through physical activity and cooking together.

Fall prevention specialists, a dietitian, outreach worker and pharmacist are just some examples of the team that helps bring this program to life. At the moment, the program is offered in both English and Cantonese. To date, SRCHC is the only site to offers such an innovative program.



Annie Chung-Hui

Recently the program was recognized and invited to do an oral presentation at the Dietitians of Canada Leadership, Diversity and Professionalism conference in Charlottetown, PEI in June 2009.

Contact: **Annie Chung-Hui ext 245 or Julie Wong ext. 250**

Working at Decreasing Air Pollution - Peg Lahn

What is air pollution?

In Toronto, air pollution is usually Ozone (O₃) which is found at ground level. Ozone is good in the upper atmosphere where it protects us from the burning power of the sun. It is not so good for our health, for plants, and for other animals when it is close to the ground in the form of smog.

Here is how ground level Ozone forms:



Burning fossil fuels releases Nitrogen oxides (NO_x or NO₂) driving cars, transporting goods in trucks, generating electricity, and heating and cooling buildings are the biggest contributors in Toronto. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are released as fumes from lots of common activities. Many paints, glues, cleaning products, solvents, pesticides, fuels, and construction materials release VOCs.


NO_x combines with VOCs in sunlight to produce ground level Ozone, which we experience as smog. This usually happens when the air is calm and the sun is strong, so most smoggy days occur between May and September.

The air can also contain small liquid or solid particles and toxics that can cause health problems - more about these in future articles. For more information or how to get involved please call: **Peg Lahn ext. 268**

SRCHC Members Personal Story:

Liz Eames - Many who attended Earth Day will remember Liz’s smiling face at the Welcome table. “That was so much fun!” she exclaims. Liz has been a user of the centre for 12 years and a member for 6. She benefitted so much from the services of SRCHC that she vowed when she retired she would give back by volunteering. Liz appreciates receiving this membership newsletter which keeps her up-to-date with events at SRCHC. Now she has become more deeply involved by joining the Membership & Outreach committees. Liz wants SRCHC to have more members and more reasons for people to become members, especially younger people.



IDEAS	RESOURCES TO HELP YOU
<p>Reduce car trips - aim for at least a 20% reduction (that's 1/5 business days per week)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car pool • Ride a bike or walk • Take transit 	<p>Check out www.toronto.ca/health/2020 (416) 392-2020 for tips</p> <p>Tune up your bike at SRCHC Thursdays from 1-3pm www.srchc.ca</p>
<p>Keep cool while conserving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use fans instead of air conditioners, consider a whole house fan • Open windows to let cool air in during the evening and morning • Keep indoor air cool by closing curtains and blinds during the day • Set air conditioners no colder than 25 degrees when you are home • Get rid of old air conditioners • Plant a shade tree 	<p>www.peakbusters.ca will help you conserve energy and manage your air conditioner - and you can win prizes!</p> <p>Consider a whole house fan. These are more common in the U.S. but can work effectively in Toronto http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/whole_house_fan</p> <p>Front yard trees (free) (416) 338-8733 www.toronto.ca/trees/tree_planting.htm</p> <p>Back yard trees (subsidized) (416) 413-9244 www.leafortoronto.org</p>
<p>Conserve water! Water is the biggest user of electricity in Toronto - water in our toilets and garden hoses, is pumped and filtered which uses LOTS of hydro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with your landlord to fix leaky taps and toilets quickly • Disconnect your downspout and use a rain barrel to water outdoor plants • How about the water that runs in the shower, while it heats up? Catch it in a bucket and use it for your plants! • Use a broom instead of the hose to clean driveways and sidewalks • Replace old toilets with low flow models 	<p>Get money back when you replace your old toilet with a low flow model (416) 392-7000</p> <p>http://www.toronto.ca/watereff/flush/index.htm</p> 
<p>Give up 2-stroke engines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a push mower instead of a gas lawnmower • Use a rake instead of a leaf blower • Choose a 4-stroke engine scooter • Going to the lake? Paddle more... gas powered vehicles are major air and water polluters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharpen your push mower so it will work like new! • Choose cleaner 4-stroke engines for jet skis, power boats, ATVs (and snowmobiles)
<p>Consider solar thermal - this system uses the power of the sun to heat the hot water for your house. It's good for the air, the climate and for your utility bills!</p>	<p>In our area (Ward 30) there are huge incentives for installing a solar thermal system</p> <p>Check out www.solarneighbourhoods.ca for details</p>



From the Board

March

Community Engagement: Susan Bender, community engagement worker, distributed a questionnaire that she is using with staff and management to find out why they and the Centre engage with the community; what roles they play with community members; what community members contribute to SRCHC programs; what resources they already use to inform, train or support community members and what else they need.

Board members were asked what and where their community involvements are. We had a brief discussion of how our many activities interconnect and relate to the work of SRCHC.

LHIN Agreement - The Board ratified the Service Accountability Agreement between the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and SRCHC effective April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2011. The agreement was structured more from a hospital perspective than a community health centre (CHC) viewpoint.

CHC's are working hard to tell their story so that a better understanding of their structure and work will be taken into consideration in future agreements

Community Organizational Health - Karen O'Connor has been elected to the COHI Board (The body that organizes accreditation for CHC's)

Serving the Uninsured - Kathleen

April Foley, Manager of the Health Services Team presented a profile of people who have no health insurance, who are a priority population served by SRCHC. This includes: folks who are eligible but lack documentation because of extenuating circumstances, those who have landed status and are in the 3-month wait period and people who are undocumented. Community Health Centres are funded to provide primary care, social services and health promotion services to the uninsured. They also receive funding to pay for diagnostics and procedures performed by specialists in

hospitals at OHIP rates. CHC's across the GTA are seeking to: develop a profile of the health care needs of the uninsured; and, meet with hospitals to develop consistent across the board fees and policies for services for the uninsured.

Waitlist - Kathleen Foley outlined the access points from which new patients enter clinical care - shelters, screening and outreach programs for example. She noted the variety of files that have become inactive and that as of March 31st, 2008 there were 98 individuals on the OHIP waitlist.

At each meeting, members of our ten work groups reported on their work. The positive results of the Open House/Earth Day work group is evident in the item in this newsletter.

May

By-laws - These were approved in principle to be forwarded to the Annual General Meeting for approval.

Please contact Ruth at (416) 461-3577, ext. 223 for more information, or if you would like to speak with a current Board member.

Introducing New Board Member

Charlie Morrison - In January, we sadly bid farewell to Maureen Adams, our capable Vice-Chair, who had to leave the Board for family reasons - and we warmly welcomed Siobhan Morrison, AKA "Charlie", to complete Maureen's term. This was ratified at the 2009 AGM.

Charlie is a resident of the SRCHC community and the Manager of Policy and Research at the Ontario College of Teachers. She brings to the Board strong analytical skills and experience in the promotion of learning. And how did she come to be known as Charlie?

While visiting her grandparents for a summer in Dublin when she was three she spent a lot of her time introducing herself as Siobhan when meeting family and friends. On the day of her arrival back in Canada, her father teased her and said he had forgotten her name. She told him he could call her "Charlie" and it stuck! Now she says her mail is always addressed to "Mr."

