



VICTORIA SINGLE PARENT  
RESOURCE CENTRE

*Practical support, empowerment, hope.*

***Annual Report 2012-2013***

***35<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Victoria Single Parent Resource Centre Society***

## **The Mission**

The Mission of the Centre is to provide single parents, caregivers, and children opportunities for learning and growth through our resources and services.

The Centre provides:

- A safe place for single parents to access resources and services.
- Free, quality counselling services regarding single parent issues.
- A broad variety of personal growth and parenting education courses.
- 'First-steps to employability' programs and volunteer training to meet the current and on-going needs of single parents.
- Graduated volunteer opportunities for parents and community members.
- A mentoring program for single moms and a support group for single dads.
- Relevant information on community-based and public services in the Greater Victoria Area.
- Consultation, support, equipment, and workshops for child care providers and referral of families to appropriate child care services and resources.
- Access to free, good quality clothing for single moms, dads and their children.
- Free bread for families through the regular donations of local bakeries.

## **History**

The Victoria Single Parent Resource Centre Society was formally registered under the Societies Act on July 13, 1978.

The Society's purpose was to assist and support single parents in their task of raising a family alone; to assist in increasing single parents' self-worth, self-confidence and self-reliance by providing a central facility where they can meet, develop friendships, and share experiences with other single parents and their families; learn of, and use community resources; and find counselling, programs and workshops related to their needs.

The Centre began in St. John's Anglican Church and then moved to a cottage owned by the church. The next move was to a much larger building at 613 Superior St. which facilitated program expansion. In 1990 we became a United Way agency and received major project funding from the then Ministry of Social Services and Housing to launch our Child Care Support Services program to provide essential support and resources to small home-run daycare operators.

With the benefit of grants and a munificent gift from a private donor, the Centre was able to purchase Humber House as its permanent home, moving in after renovations in January 1992. The house is a heritage building, built around 1886 by George Humber.

For thirty-five years, the Single Parent Resource Centre has mentored and changed the lives of single parents, child care providers, and children through the dedicated service of many staff, board and volunteers.

## **Table of Contents**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b><i>Chair's Report</i></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Treasurer's Report</i></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Fundraising Committee Report</i></b>	<b>6</b>
<b><i>Nominating and Membership Committee Report</i></b>	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Personnel Committee Report</i></b>	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Relocation Committee Report</i></b>	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Policy and Procedures Revision Committee Report</i></b>	<b>9</b>
<b><i>Executive Director's Report</i></b>	<b>9</b>
<b><i>Counselling Program Report</i></b>	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Volunteer Program Report</i></b>	<b>12</b>
<b><i>Educational Programs Report</i></b>	<b>13</b>
<b><i>MOMentum Series: 1Up Moms and Mentors Program Report</i></b>	<b>14</b>
<b><i>Child Care Resource &amp; Referral Program Report</i></b>	<b>16</b>
<b><i>Thank You!</i></b>	<b>17</b>

Welcome to the thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting of our 1Up, Single Parent Resource Centre.

I, and our very excellent Board are proud of the Centre, and are deeply appreciative of our staff...the people who deliver service day after day. They are capable, kind, patient, generous and helpful, and at times heroically tireless. In return, they receive – in addition to modest recompense – the deep satisfaction of knowing that they make lives better for Moms, Dads, and Grandparents and the children they are raising.

But none of that could happen without funding for which we are very grateful, from The Province of B.C. for Child Care Resource and Referral, and from The United Way for SPRC. On a more immediate personal level, we rely – like Blanche Dubois – “on the kindness of strangers”: that amazing growing group of open-hearted people who care a lot about people they’ve never met, and dig deep to help us meet needs as best we can. These Donors number among them a growing group of people who were helped as kids or young parents years ago and are now proud and able to give back. And then we have Laurie Kelley and Scott Poole, a wonderful couple who stand by us year after year as our most generous donors. If they had competition for that spot we’d be sitting pretty. We now have an Endowment Fund through and with the Victoria Foundation which can encourage bequests and other donations for at least the next thirty-five years.

I welcome Chief Constable Mark Fisher to our Board. His knowledge of social realities is invaluable.

This report, late as it is, legally covers events to March 31, 2013. Much has ensued since. Stay tuned for 2014.

**Treasurer's Report****Nelson Thomas**

I am pleased to present the financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2013 and the review engagement report prepared by our accountants, Flanagan & Fletcher.

The statements present the operations of the Society as a whole and include the core services and programs offered by the Society, and the services and programs offered by the Child Care Resource and Referral Program (CCRR). The results of these operations, summarized by program, are as follows:

**2012/2013 Revenues and Expenditures by Program**

	<b><u>Core Programs</u></b>	<b><u>CCRR Program</u></b>	<b><u>2013 Total</u></b>	<b><u>2012 Total</u></b>
<b>Revenues</b>	\$ 452,453	\$ 421,673	\$ 874,126	\$ 845,955
<b>Expenditures</b>	<u>418,804</u>	<u>422,038</u>	<u>840,842</u>	<u>836,769</u>
<b>Surplus</b>	<u>\$ 33,649</u>	<u>\$ (365)</u>	<u>\$ 33,284</u>	<u>\$ 9,186</u>

The above results reflect the surplus for the year before amortization and any transfers to the capital fund for capital asset purchases. Revenues in Core Programs include about \$63,000 in allocated administration fees and salaries from CCRR.

Much of the surplus in Core Programs reflects fundraising revenues in excess of budgeted amounts. The budgeted deficit for the year was reversed mainly by significant revenue received from fundraising and by additional revenues received from the United Way and from the Direct Access Gaming Grant larger than budgeted amounts.

### 2012/2013 Sources of Revenue by Program

	<b>2013 Core Programs</b>	<b>2012 Core Programs</b>	<b>2013 CCRR Program</b>	<b>2012 CCRR Program</b>
<b>Province of British Columbia</b>				
<b>Columbia</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 408,966	\$ 408,965
<b>United Way</b>	118,166	115,364	-	-
<b>Fundraising</b>	192,017	176,852	-	-
<b>CCRR</b>	63,440	62,948	-	-
<b>City of Victoria</b>	14,620	14,500	-	
<b>Fees and others</b>	<u>64,210</u>	<u>70,082</u>	<u>12,707</u>	<u>11,744</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>\$452,453</u>	<u>\$439,746</u>	<u>\$ 421,673</u>	<u>\$ 420,709</u>

Fundraising revenues include \$78,245 from the B.C. Lottery Corporation relating to the Society's direct access grants.

The Society continued to rely on funding from the Province of British Columbia and the United Way during the year while overall funding from other sources remains stable. As in other years the Executive Director and the Board have expended considerable efforts to increase the Society's funding base and to reduce the Society's reliance on the Province and on the United Way.

### 2012/2013 Expenditures by Program

	<b>2013 Core Programs</b>	<b>2012 Core Programs</b>	<b>2013 CCRR Program</b>	<b>2012 CCRR Program</b>
<b>Program Delivery</b>	\$ 282,729	\$ 300,389	\$ 250,497	\$ 254,609
<b>Office</b>	32,717	34,362	10,472	13,248
<b>Premises</b>	40,235	39,465	103,027	95,424
<b>Others</b>	<u>63,123</u>	<u>56,201</u>	<u>58,042</u>	<u>57,571</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>\$ 418,804</u>	<u>\$ 430,417</u>	<u>\$ 422,038</u>	<u>\$ 420,852</u>

Core Program expenditures decreased slightly from 2012 while CCRR operations remain relatively stable. Core Program premises, office, program delivery and other expenditures all remained relatively consistent with the previous year.

To March 31, 2012 the Core Programs fund has an accumulated operating surplus of about \$220,000 which represents significant and continuing increases from previous years.

I would like to thank our accountant Mike Flanagan of the firm Flanagan & Fletcher for his many years of faithful and professional service. I would also like to thank Executive Director Liz Bloomfield for all of her help and support throughout the year.

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### ***Fundraising Committee Report***

***Liz Bloomfield, Chair***

*Members:* Alice Ages, Liz Bloomfield, Christine Kenwood, Lynne Moorhouse, Melanie Golder, Trevor Tuckwell, Kari Frazer, Kerry Walsh

The Fundraising Committee worked very hard this past year to increase individual and major donations, attract new business and corporate sponsors, and raise 1Up's public profile. We are heartened by the progress we made. Major achievements are as follows: First, Kari Frazer, our fundraising consultant, led us in the creation of different Funds that enable donors to direct in-kind and cash donations to areas of priority need and directly see the impact of their gift. Donations to the Practical Support Fund help to run our clothing room and bread room, school supplies drive and Christmas hamper program and provide parents with emergency items throughout the year, such as food vouchers and transportation assistance. And gifts to our Happy, Healthy Kids Fund help support important programs, such Moms and Mentors and Lighthouse Parent, that help build parenting skills that result in healthy, well-adjusted children.

Second, we created the '1Up Community Relations Team', a passionate group of volunteers, the majority single parents, to represent our organization at community venues and events thereby increasing awareness of our organization and services for single parent families.

Third, we formed new corporate partnerships and relationships and cemented existing ones as follows.

- We partnered once again with the Ocean 98.5 and Jack FM to promote our annual school supplies drive and formed an exciting new partnership with Staples who donated one-third of all donations collected at the till at each of their three locations to 1Up (two-thirds went to local schools). As a result, we reached our \$ 11,000 goal, the amount needed to supply new backpacks to all the families who applied for assistance, and help a total of 228 children (71 more children than the previous year).
- The Ocean 98.5 and Jack FM once again sponsored 'The 12 Days of Giving' campaign to support our Christmas hamper drive through the purchase of gift cards.

The new venue of Save-On Foods increased public awareness of our agency and its programs.

- We were selected by CIBC Wood Gundy to receive a major gift of \$ 10,000 through their Miracle Day campaign which featured local hockey hero, Trevor Linden.
- Investors Group sponsored a preview of the movie, 'The Hobbit' at Silver City in support of 1Up, raising over \$ 2,000

The combined results of these activities and the support of our generous donors is that it has been a banner year for fundraising. I am pleased and proud to report that for the first time in our organization's history fundraising revenues from individual, business and corporate donations exceeded \$ 100,000! I would like to thank all the members of the Committee, in particular, Kari Frazer and Kerry Walsh, for their hard work and dedication.

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***Nominating and Membership Committee Report***

***Krista Robertson, Chair***

Members: *Krista Robertson, Alice Ages, Christine Kenwood, Christine St. Peter, Liz Bloomfield*

The Committee is pleased to report the appointment of a new Board member, Mark Fisher, on February 27, 2013. Mark is the Chief Constable at Oak Bay Police Department. In his application for Board membership, Mark indicated his long time admiration of 1UP, which he developed in the course of his community work with the Police Department. The Committee is excited to welcome Mark to the Board, and looks forward to the benefits of his unique and valuable contribution to 1UP.

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***Personnel Committee Report***

***Alice Ages, Chair***

Members: *Alice Ages, Edie Copland, Christine Kenwood, Christine St. Peter, Liz Bloomfield*

CCRR's receptionist Danielle Dzioba left December 14th to further her education. Her position was filled January 2nd by Mackenzie Gibson. Patsy Dutton, our long-term Consultant retired on March 8th, and Leslie Porterfield succeeded to that position on February 25th. Both Mackenzie and Leslie fit well and bring fresh perspective.

Educational Programs welcomes Sheldon Kitkul as our new 'Dads With Dads' facilitator with his valued insight and leadership.

Moms and Mentors Program now has a Childminding Coordinator/Program Assistant. The program has grown, and need for support for the moms and children...and Annette. Sanni (Susanne) Rosebrock has her ECE and Special Needs Certification; a degree in

Child and Youth Care; and years of experience in a family centre setting. Moms can and do consult with her on family issues and parenting concerns. She began March 29th.

Our vital consultants Kari Fraser and Kerry Walsh completed their contracts March 31st.

Note that this report deals only with coming and going – the departure of someone and their replacement by someone else. The splendid work of all our excellent people is lauded elsewhere.

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***Relocation Committee Report***

***Christine St. Peter, Chair***

Members: *Christine St. Peter, Alice Ages, Edie Copland, Barbara Herringer, William Lake, Liz Bloomfield, Catherine MacDonald*

This year has been extremely busy for relocation planning, especially for Liz Bloomfield (E.D., 1Up), Edie Copland (E.D., Silver Threads Services) and Karin Macaulay (President, Centennial Daycare Society.) These three, representing the Trio of societies, have formed part of a small working group with members of the St. John the Divine (SJD) Development Committee (Deborah Curran and Graeme Brown) in an effort to work out a possible partnership for the “Trio” societies with the SJD congregation. As well as the working groups’ meetings (Nov 23, Dec 5, Jan 16, Jan 23, Feb 6, Feb 28, Mar 6), each of the three relocation committees of the Trio agencies have met individually to consider the evolving discussion, and all three relocation committees have met as a group together several times with CitySpaces (Deane Strongitharme and Brenda McBain) who continue to help the Trio deal with the complex business of creating a partnership.

Among the several topics explored are the following: timeline for Diocese approval for the redevelopment proposal; shared vision and values; site plan; site management; space needs of Trio; functional needs of Trio agencies; building size; building operation; land tenure and lease terms; timelines for rezoning, building design and permits, capital fundraising; shared property costs (maintenance and utilities); campus animation; environmental & sustainability issues, and latterly, a fourth floor with extra tenants. Not least among the tasks has been the development of feasible MOUs, both among the Trio Societies and between the Trio group and SJD. For the Trio MOU a committee has created a Consensus Policy; a Conflict Resolution Policy; a Confidentiality Policy, and a Development and Operating Agreement. The first drafts of these sections of the Trio MOU are now being reviewed by each agency.

From one perspective, all this work seems to have resulted in little significant progress, but from another – quoting our hopeful and effective E.D. – this is all part of a process and some things have been achieved. For one, the Anglican Diocese has given permission to the Church to continue, and the congregation appears to be wrestling with how to proceed. We are still, they claim, preferred partners in the development of the church property and the Trio finds the location very promising. That said, SJD have insisted that they wish to have greater density than our projected three stories and the Trio’s Boards have, with some reluctance, agreed that there could be a fourth floor, but only on the condition that the money for its complete cost would be covered by fundraising—fundraising that would encompass the whole 4-floor building which would then

put the Trio in the position of having contributing tenants on the paid-off property as anything less might jeopardize the financial stability of the Trio's operations.

The work of this prospective collaboration has been generously supported by grants from both the Victoria Foundation and Vancity. Like the Trio, they await developments from the SJD side of the equation. And given that that partnership is by no means assured, we continue to explore other options, particularly with the Greater Victoria Housing Society (Kaye Melliship) and its partner, the Greater Victoria Rental Development Society (Alanna Holroyd.)

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***Policies and Procedures Revision Committee Report*** ***Lynne Moorhouse, Chair***

Members: *Lynne Moorhouse, Alice Ages, Liz Bloomfield*

The Policies and Procedures for 1Up- Single Parent Resource Centre, continues to be in DRAFT form but more closely outlines the current policies, procedures and programs provided by the Centre. Directors of the boards and committees have worked on the sections and revisions are still in progress.

The Final Handbook will be completed by Fall 2013.

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***Executive Director's Report*** ***Liz Bloomfield***

The past year has been one of growth and change, one in which our services have grown and evolved to meet the increased number and changing needs of single parent families within our community. Our staff has noted in their reports the increasing complexity of concerns and issues that single parents are dealing with – not surprisingly, as parents courageously face the challenges of raising a family on one income, often without support, in an increasingly complex world. At the same time, economic pressures, increased requirements from funders for accountability through performance and outcome measures, and the need to keep up with advances in technology have spurred us on to change, adapt and grow at the organizational level, a challenge which we have embraced and met with significant success.

At the service delivery level, we responded through increasing resources for parents. As our Moms and Mentors program has grown, so has the number of families who require additional supports. To meet their needs, we created the new position of Childminding Coordinator and contracted with a highly skilled early childhood educator with special needs certification and a degree in child and youth care. As a result, isolated, single moms have increased resources for parenting information and concerns and expert referral to community resources. We also expanded our team of course facilitators under our Educational Programs with the acquisition of a talented new facilitator for our successful and growing support group for single dads. Enrolment in the Dads' group and the complexity of the issues fathers bring to the group increase as referrals increase under our new parenting programs contract with the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Our counselling services were enhanced and our waitlist reduced through the addition of counseling intake workers (skilled and trained peer helpers) and the services of Ann Tasko, RCC who volunteered her time weekly to address the growing demand for counseling support. As a result, we offered over 350 counselling sessions last year. Our Peer Helper volunteer program also expanded to include a collaborative learning component through the addition of our successful new 'Shared Wisdom' workshops. And our Child Care Resource and Referral Program continued to forge new community partnerships and has earned accolades for the creation of the new Provocation Studio, a learning studio for educators and child care providers.

At the organizational level, we increased our agency's effectiveness and efficiency and contributed to its sustainability through a most effective and efficient approach – leveraging the resources of skilled volunteers; namely, our talented and extremely hard-working volunteer Board of Directors! This past year, Board committees have been more active than ever in the areas of personnel, fundraising, policy revision, board recruitment, and of course, pursuit of the relocation of our organization. Our Board of Directors continued to grow and benefit from the skills of new board members, most latterly the addition of Mark Fisher. We also drew on the skills of our past clients and volunteers to create the '1 Up Community Relations Team', a passionate group of women (men are welcome too!) who have enthusiastically embraced their role of representing our Centre and the interests of single parents at community venues and events.

We also leveraged our financial resources. In July, the Board of Directors approved the creation of an endowment for single parents through the Victoria Foundation's 'Smart & Caring Community Fund' initiative through which we received a matching grant of \$7,500. We are very grateful to the Victoria Foundation for this unique opportunity which recognizes the value of small, non-profit agencies in our community, and the need to support their work.

Related to this, we again contracted with a fundraising professional to guide our hard-working Fundraising Committee's ongoing efforts to create a sustainable revenue base for our programs and services. We created our Practical Support Fund and Happy, Healthy Kids Fund that enable donors to direct in-kind and cash donations to areas of priority need and directly see the impact of their gift. And we diversified and expanded our funding sources to include new corporate partnerships. Of particular note is our new partnership with Staples which has allowed us to expand the number of children helped through our annual school supplies drive. We also enhanced our visibility in the community through improved communications. We have successfully incorporated social media into our toolkit and we now have an active presence on 'Facebook' and 'Twitter'. As a result of these combined efforts, our fundraising revenues grew substantially, exceeding \$ 100,000 for the first time in our organization's history!

With respect to relocation, the 'Trio' (comprised of 1Up, Silver Threads Services and Centennial Daycare Society) and our shared vision of an intergenerational hub of family services continue to capture the imagination and support of the community, as evidenced most recently through a \$ 20,000 grant from the Vancity Community Foundation, enhancing the ongoing and substantial support of the Victoria Foundation. Relocation Committee members have worked tirelessly, with the assistance of CitySpaces Consulting, to secure a site for our new building. We continue to pursue a potential partnership with Saint John the Divine to locate our new building on their property (linked to Saint John's broader plan for redevelopment). Related work has been development of an internal MOU among the 'Trio', the creation of a framework for

an MOU with Saint John, and development of a pre-capital campaign information package for potential leaders and campaign cabinet members.

In summary, it has indeed been a year of significant growth and change. When I reflect on the past year, and all that we have accomplished, I feel enormously proud of our 'little' organization!

I would like to thank our talented, hard-working volunteer Board of Directors. In particular, I would like to recognize our Board Chair, Alice Ages, our Treasurer, Nelson Thomas, and hard-working members of our Executive, Christine Kenwood and Christine St. Peter. These individuals have also given their time on other committees and, most important to me, their unfailing support.

I also want to thank our wonderful staff and volunteers who pour their hearts into their work every day. You are the spirit of our organization. Thank you for your warmth, your good humour and your excellent work over the past year.

And thank you to our generous donors, funders and community partners for your continued belief in our organization and support of single parent families in our community. You are all part of the 'village' it takes to raise a child and we are profoundly grateful for your contributions.

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***Counselling Program***

***Cheryl Dyck, Counsellor***

Counselling was busy as usual this past year. I offered 256 counselling sessions and on top of that Ann Tasko, a Registered Clinical Counsellor, offered another three sessions one afternoon per week. There is a very high demand for the free counselling we offer. We have counselling intake workers (skilled and trained peer helpers) doing a brief intake process with new clients by phone or in person so that when Ann and I have spots available we can schedule people in and have a thorough overview of their concerns. It has been really good to have Ann here in a volunteer counsellor role. It is a great support to me as I can consult and seek advice as I need it. I have been able to take advantage of her skills and expertise on many occasions now. It helps me sharpen my own skills and ensures that clients get the most effective assistance for finding solutions.

Counselling clients are coming in with a wide range of concerns. I find that I am talking about a number of subjects repeatedly: developmental stages of children and adolescents, physiology of stress and anxiety, identification of personal resources, identifying exceptions to times of stress/crisis, and looking at emotion regulation and effective communication. I have also been seeing a few people who are experiencing Ministry involvement in their lives. These are times of great stress for them and much of the session is spent trying to assist them in coping with this stress and brainstorming how to keep a collaborative, constructive relationship with the workers who are involved. These issues provide some rich learning for me and sessions feel productive and fruitful.

It was another great year for all things related to volunteering. We have a very accomplished and skilled group of committed people who spend time here. The work of the volunteer peer helpers continues to be essential to the running of the Centre and the ongoing assistance to our membership.

In this past year the volunteers completed approximately 78 intakes for new members and they provided a total of 433 resource based support sessions (about 72 each month). Earlier this year we started tracking referrals on our daily phone stats form. We saw some great results showing that volunteers made 522 referrals of which 70 were for housing resources, 45 were food related, 40 were parenting or pregnancy related, 44 were for legal matters, 45 were for family or child counselling, 48 were for adult counselling, 51 were related to financial matters, 28 were education related and 50 were childcare related. There were also 101 referrals noted in our "Other" category. Some of these were for the following supports: landlord/tenancy issues, summer camps, Sleep Country bed program, bus tickets, clothing, the Ministry Duty Worker, supervised visits, crisis line, dental, furniture, addictions, courses, and suicide prevention. The Peer Helpers continue to be a most valuable and essential service to our membership and people in the community who contact us. The volunteers are connecting vulnerable people to the resources they need to improve their lives.

We had a very successful school supplies drive because Kari Frazer, our Fund Development Consultant was able to secure Staples as an ongoing supporter of this much needed program. With their assistance and the publicity from Ocean 98.5 we helped many more families this year than in previous years. We hope to continue this partnership which will allow us to help the most number of people who need assistance at this expensive time of year.

There was a new volunteer position advertised and filled this year. We recruited and found two women who became our Data Entry volunteers. They set up an Access Data Base for us and began to enter in all the information from our membership files to form a data base of all our clients. To date they have completed about 200 files. Only 1100 to go! One of our new peer helper volunteers has taken over the data entry duties and we hope to get some others working on it soon. Their hard work will make information gathering and statistics generating a much simpler and quick process.

Important numbers:

- 34: number of active volunteers
- 120: average number of referrals made each month
- 230: number of children who received school supplies
- 63: number of families helped with a Christmas hamper
- 22: number of emergency Christmas hampers provided
- 12: number of Shared Wisdom Workshops held
- 1305: number of single parent member families
- 85: average number of phone or in-person support sessions per month
- 311: average number of children who come in to the Centre each month
- 404: average number of people who sign in to use the Centre each month

That is a glimpse of some of our accomplishments in the past year. It is important to also recognize that many of these accomplishments could not be achieved if it were not for our wonderful donors and sponsors. There are so many individuals and groups who work hard each year and behind the scenes to take care of our members. We could not provide such comprehensive assistance to our members if it was not for these caring, community minded supporters! It is an honour for me to work side by side with such big hearted people. Thanks to all of you, our donors and volunteers, for making my job so enjoyable and rewarding.

During this past year we ran 19 parenting programs and served 122 single parents and we ran 15 life skills programs, serving 106 adults. In total, 400 children were supported in their healthy development due to the fact that their parents increased their capacity to understand and implement effective life and parenting skills. (215 children were supported through the parenting programs and 185 children were supported through the life skills programs.)

Feedback from the group participants was indeed encouraging. We heard repeatedly how safe they felt to explore their lives as they have lived them. All programs were facilitated from the perspective of a 'strengths-based, whole person' approach where parents were encouraged to examine what was going right in their lives (past and present). It mattered not how small any strength appeared to the parent, they started their learning journey from that point forward.

No matter the course, all facilitators were conversant with the current research, resources, knowledge and skills as they related to their topic area. As well, they were highly sensitive to the needs of their students and they recognized when their students needed to be helped to safely explore new concepts or ideas. All facilitators were keenly aware of times when their students needed to unload any fears or concerns they had and they made a safe environment in which to do this.

Consistently parents commented on how surprised they felt to learn they 'weren't the only ones' having these feelings and experiences. As the courses progressed, they felt a greater sense of connection and a letting go of their isolated selves as they delved into their issues. Many students actually expressed surprise to see themselves actively participating in the group dynamic. I believe many parents thought they would come to group and passively take in the content. All our groups are interactive and experiential so it was heartwarming to hear comments about how they felt a sense of relief or joy or peace to actually take part in the group process. They experienced a feeling of strength to carry on in a slightly altered path that they came to learn as being more in line with their emerging values.

I cannot leave unspoken the concern I have felt for the nature and quality of many single parents' lives at this time. I have had many, many hours of interview time with men and women who are investigating our Anatomy of Anger class. The Centre has had an increase in Ministry of Children and Family Development referrals to our programs so it might be expected that the intensity of the parents' concerns from that referral source would exacerbate the clients' anger. However, over the last couple of years I see our single parents coming to us from any referral source with more complex and complicated issues and the resulting anger that has been building in their lives has been the impetus which has brought them to our program.

Due to some client's unrecognized or uncontrolled anger, I have needed to disallow some parents from being accepted into the program. In the interview we examine their personal circumstances, and if a decision is made that they are not appropriate for the group, the reasons for the decision have been well discussed and understood by the client. They have been resourced elsewhere in the community with the invitation to come back to our program after certain other personal steps have been taken.

However, I can happily say that the largest percentage of people who come to us are dealing with anger, and not rage, and are thus provided entry into the course. Their comments after taking the course reflect their appreciation and new self-understanding.

This is not only a plus for the course participants but for their family and our community as well.

In closing, I would like to offer my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to our wonderful, generous and knowledgeable group facilitators. We have welcomed Sheldon Kitkul as our new Dads With Dads facilitator. He has slid into his new role with grace and confidence and the dads appreciate his insight and leadership. Laurie Moniz, Praven Pather and Joanne Southcombe have once again provided stellar leadership to our single parents. The facilitators and I consider ourselves as a 'team' and I see our individual facilitator strength as a collective strength as well. Thank you all for your time and dedication to 1Up. Thank you to the staff and board who have allowed for time, space and opportunity for our community to grow and prosper one single parent at a time. Additionally, I would like to extend my appreciation to our generous funders who have made possible this personal growth opportunity for our single parent families. Thank you to the United Way of Greater Victoria, The Victoria Foundation, Success By Six and the Province of BC. Without this network of funders supporting us, we could not provide these vitally important programs which positively impact so many single parents and their children.

***MOMentum Series: 1Up Moms and Mentors Program***

***Annette De Boer, Coordinator***

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Without financial support from our generous funders, the 1Up Moms and Mentors (1Up M&Ms) program would not have the opportunity to partner with these courageous single moms and their children through the support and time shared by our amazing volunteer mentors. Many thanks to our program funders who provided essential financial support for the program during this past year: the United Way of Greater Victoria, Success By 6, the Greater Victoria Savings and Credit Union Legacy Foundation and the Province of BC. Thank you!

Over the course of this reporting period, 31 single moms, 51 children and 24 volunteer mentors participated in the program. 11 children of mentors also participated making a total of 62 children. A total of 27 mentor matches were celebrated over the year: 9 matches completed, 15 are ongoing and 3 ended early.

A very exciting program addition was made in March, 2013! Susanne 'Sanni' Rosebrock joined 1Up Moms and Mentors as a contracted Childminding Coordinator/Program Assistant. Sanni has her ECE and Special Needs Certification, as well as a degree in Child and Youth Care. Sanni has years of experience working in the family centre setting, and her transition into the program has been seamless. Program participants are able to consult with Sanni regarding parenting issues and family concerns both in and around monthly meetings. In light of increasing complexities evident in participating families, Sanni has been consulted numerous times already.

Community program partnerships continue to be a strong value for the 1Up M&Ms program participants and coordinators. Program Coordinators continue to meet with program facilitators from Boys and Girls Club, Care Home Parenting Program, Young Moms' Program (formerly Kiwanis House Program) and Artemis Society (GAP) through bi-monthly coalition meetings.

Program partnership with LifeCycles Garden Project continues through creating opportunities for moms and their children to make gardens to grow food, to participate in the Fruit Pickers Project and to learn about ideas and strategies surrounding providing nutritious food for our families on a budget. LifeCycles will facilitate a workshop at our monthly Saturday meeting in September 2013 looking at: *Ways to Reduce the Cost of Food for our Families*, which will include a workshop on preserving.

Monthly Saturday meetings during this reporting period covered topics such as: *Garden Tour* at Glendale Gardens; *Goal Setting Strategies* (Ann Tasko, RCC and former Moms and Mentors program coordinator); *Jewelry Making Workshop* (Trisha Bing, Peer Helper from 1Up); *How to Speak to our Children About Sexual Health* (Jennifer Gibson, BA, MA: Island Sexual Health); Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria focus group: *Action Plan for Sustainable Living in Victoria* (Marika Albert); *Communicating and Boundaries* (Sarah Daviau, Piece of Cake Communications); *Embracing Imperfection: Learning to be kinder to ourselves and others* (Maddy Dams, MPA and current volunteer mentor) and *Changes to the BC Family Law Act* (Elaine M. Davies, lawyer and family mediation). Monthly Saturday meetings continue to be enjoyed by program participants. I frequently hear how helpful and meaningful training and information topics have been in the lives of families participating. Thank you to each one of our facilitators for sharing your expertise and time to inspire and grow knowledge in our group!

In the summer months, 1Up M&Ms met at Goldstream Picnic Area in June, Beacon Hill Park (Music in the Park) in July, and Beckwith Water Park in August for a picnic and time to catch up and socialize with each other. The Goldstream BBQ highlight for the children was a piñata, thanks to Lise, one of our awesome childminders!

Another yearly program highlight is the 1Up Moms and Mentors Christmas Party held in December. The morning begins with an opportunity for moms, mentors and the older children, to participate in a centrepiece making workshop, facilitated by a former mentor, Terri Smith. Last December 25 people took part in the workshop and were able to take home a beautiful centrepiece for Christmas. While the workshop was running, the younger children enjoy making crafts with the child minders and volunteers. This year we also had access to the gym which helped to create more space for participants. A traditional meal was served with help from many people. Special thanks to Ann, Lynn and Murray for purchasing, preparing and carving up the turkeys! 19 moms, 11 mentors, 39 children, 17 staff, volunteers and family attended for a total of 86 people. Fun, music, a visit from Santa and good food made this a festive event enjoyed by all!

And finally, the program would not function without the incredible support and wisdom shared by our volunteer mentors. These women are taking action to build strength and connections with families in our community led by single mothers. At our monthly mentor training/support meetings, we share the joys and challenges of mentoring. Areas of personal growth and new learning through volunteering as a mentor are discussed. Training topics such as: *Development of the Mentor Relationship*; *Power of Vulnerability* (TED Talks); *Listening to Shame* (TED Talks); *Trauma Informed Care/Support*; and *Boundaries and Mentoring* often springboard meaningful conversation and discussion!

Thank you to our tireless volunteer mentors who work hard to create a stronger, more resilient community through supporting and befriending the precious single moms and their children who participate in 1Up Moms and Mentors Program.

Our Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) program has experienced a few staffing changes over the past year. Patsy Dutton, our child care consultant, retired in the New Year. Danielle Dzioba, our receptionist, went on to further her education in Vancouver. We welcomed Lesley Porterfield as our new consultant and Mackenzie Gibson as our new receptionist. Both women have brought a fresh perspective to the program and we're excited to have them as part of our team. Lisa Yates and Shauna Fraser, our referral/subsidy consultants, had a very busy year with parent services. They recorded 1,515 parents they assisted with child care subsidy applications and 2,053 parents they assisted to find child care. Bravo! Lisa and Shauna continued to speak at the health units and community events about child care choices.

Our vision to have our program resonate the Reggio Emilia approach for working with children was fulfilled and continues to be a guiding principle for our training and resource selection. Our Child Care Month celebration kicked off the vision with The Images of Learning Project exhibit being displayed at the CCRR. This was a facilitated exhibit with Danielle Davis and Kim Atkinson. We retained Danielle and Kim to present their four part course that spoke to children's competencies and capabilities and how educators could begin the process of changing their environments, materials, and beliefs about their work with children. To go hand-in-hand with the concepts of the course, Danielle and Kim developed the Provocation Studio upstairs. This is a learning studio for educators and child care providers to come, observe, and engage with thoughtful materials within an aesthetically beautiful environment. The culmination of all of this wonderful training was the bus trip to New Westminster to see The 100 Languages of Children Exhibit at the end of November. This was a financial partnership with Success By 6, ECEBC Victoria, and our CCRR. It was truly inspirational to have 56 educators and their collective energy together for one day!

The Ministry for Children and Family Development continued to provide its grant for educators' training events. This allowed our program to continue with its funding of quality, inspiring workshop events in the community. As a result, Peninsula Connections received funding for their two annual events, Camosun College's Early Learning and Care (ELC) program received funding for their Mentors' Workshop event, and we hosted two Family Child Care Training courses. The new training events we funded were The Images of Learning course, a facilitated learning event in the Provocation Studio for the first and second year ELC students from Camosun College, and a special training event on Salt Spring Island for educators, child care providers, Strong Start facilitators, and school district representatives.

We were excited to partner with the Ministry of Social Development in support of one of their programs. We were approached to provide a space for one of their Employment Assistance Workers, Chantelle Easton. She has a number of informal, satellite spaces throughout the community to support her Family Youth Partnership Initiative. She requires her clients to be actively seeking employment, thereby necessitating the need for child care. Chantelle sets up appointments with her clients to meet her at the CCRR and have a personal referral with one of our consultants.

On behalf of our program and our team I want to thank Liz Bloomfield and the Board for their continued support. I also want to acknowledge the generous funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

## **Thank you!**

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**We gratefully acknowledge the support the Society receives from so many groups and individuals:**

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### **Project and Program Funding**

BC Ministry of Children and Family Development  
BC Ministry of Housing and Social Development  
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