



What's new under the sun - Fall/Winter 2009 Newsletter

Housing Youth in a Time of Need

Assisting youth in finding a place to live is the easy part of being a housing provider. It's finding the *right* place for them that is challenging. Sometimes youth share things about themselves that allows you to place them in the "perfect" setting. Other times they hold back and "just want a way out." Those who 'just want a way out' usually end up back at Horizons for Youth to seek housing services once again.

Please let me take this opportunity to share with you a write up of a young man who came to the housing office open and honest about what he wanted. Clear about what he did not want, however, still unsure of what were the best options for him. He will share with you his experience from shelter resident to a housed client, in a subsidized housing program. He is independent, employed and has future goals that will make him not only successful, but a role model to the youth who reside here today.

When I first came to Horizons it was a brand new experience. It was my first time staying in a shelter, and for the most part it became a place I called home. Horizons helped me to realize that I wasn't the only person in my situation. I came from a situation where I no longer had housing and a job to support myself. I was bouncing back and forth between friend's places. I knew in the back of my mind it wouldn't always stay this way.

When I first stepped into the housing office I was made aware of the different options I had, and realized that getting an apartment through the Housing Allowance Program would be my best option. It has given me an opportunity over the next four years to gain independence, responsibility and further focus on goals I want to achieve, at an affordable cost that suits my income. Leaving Horizons, I look at all the resources that have been made available to me. Resources like HAP, which I hope every youth staying at Horizons will take advantage of. It's one opportunity that I have taken, and I thank all the staff at Horizons and all the sponsors that contribute in making a difference to youth who are in need, but also youth who have aspirations and dreams. Now that I've left, I still look at Horizons knowing I can come back and receive the support I need until one day I'll be able to do it on my own. I'll be continuing to push forward, and it makes a difference knowing that I have people that believe in me.

-Mike, former resident at Horizons for Youth

There are many youth who are in the same position that Mike found himself in. Mike thanks Horizons for Youth for believing in him. He believed in himself and focused with our support on what needed to be done.

Luisa Tabone
Housing Worker

Horizons for Youth is a 35 bed emergency shelter and resource centre for homeless and at-risk young people aged 16 to 24. At Horizons, we offer shelter and valuable services in a safe and supportive environment. In addition to beds, meals, snacks and personal hygiene items, we also provide supportive counseling, life skills training, referrals, advocacy and after shelter support. These services assist youth as they strive to establish themselves at school, at work and in the community.

Around the Shelter

Volunteer Involvement at Horizons for Youth

The past six months have seen a number of volunteers and volunteer groups come to Horizons for Youth to lend a helping hand in various capacities. We have had groups paint our upstairs hallways and resident room's, help out in the kitchen and help us beautify our garden.

All of this help would not have been possible without the United Way and Volunteer Toronto, who set us up with these wonderful volunteer groups.

Thank you to all the volunteer groups from UPS, the Ontario Government, Tourism Toronto, BMO, RBC, TD Bank, Scotiabank, Kraft Canada, Janssen-Ortho, HJ Heinz and Proctor & Gamble for their tireless efforts.

If you or a group you are part of would like to volunteer and give back to those less fortunate, please contact Keith Clarke at 416.781.9898 ext. 27 or e-mail him at keith@horizonsforyouth.org

Candles for the Holidays

Horizons for Youth have received a gift-in-kind donation of Metallic Taper Candles hand dipped in holiday season colours that we are selling to raise funds for the holiday season. The candles come in three colours; red, gold and silver.

The candles come in a set of 4 and are \$ 4 for 1 box. We will also be selling 3 boxes for \$10.

Please contact Keith at 416.781.9898 ext. 27 or keith@horizonsforyouth.org to place your order and support homeless youth during the holidays.

Horizons is now on Facebook

Horizons for Youth is now on Facebook.

Please add us as a friend online to find out what's going on in our various programs and services and also about our events and meetings.



Day Program Services

There have been many positive changes in the Day Program within the past six months. We have revitalized our Board Room, enhanced our programming and are in the process of starting a GED Program, just to name a few initiatives that are taking place at Horizons.

The Tri-Mentoring program, a student led group from Ryerson University, will be offering the youth at Horizons a number of services including a tour of Ryerson's campus, facilitating workshops at the shelter and tutoring opportunities. The students of the Tri-Mentoring Program will be leading workshops they feel will be relevant to our youth, while also utilizing their areas of expertise. We are also looking forward to potential opportunities for our youth to become involved in the College preparation course run at Ryerson.

Horizons Life Skills programs are an important element of the Day Program. They are geared at preparing the youth leaving the shelter to successfully live independently in the community. Social and conflict resolution skills are addressed in the Anger Control Program, which continues to be a regular certificate program. Healthy Cooking and Ready Set Home address important budgeting, cooking, and other independent living skills. Diversity programming is another important piece in adjusting to any independent living environment in Toronto. This program will include discussions around Country Outlook, an educational tool that provides readers with in-depth knowledge on a wide variety of different cultures, guest speakers and outings in the community.

Some of the changes occurring in the Day Program have already started. The Board Room has been set up in order to begin an after school homework club for residents attending school. A GED preparatory program is another much needed program that has been implemented since October. Working in conjunction with local organizations to assist our youth in attaining a high school level diploma. Evening programming, including baking, art, outings and an addictions workshop run by front line staff will be introduced and regularly scheduled in the coming months, as well as a continuation of the knitting and music programs established last winter. We are looking forward to the exciting new developments this fall/winter and hope to smoothly integrate new programming with the other important programs already established at Horizons for Youth.

Nina McQuigge
Day Program Coordinator

Career Horizons-Generating Opportunities, Getting on the Right Track

Career Horizons has been at 411 Duplex (Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue West) since March 2009, and in that time 14 youth have successfully completed pre-vocational Life Skills Workshops. Currently, Career Horizons is supporting youth, from our sixth session with their new jobs, as well as getting ready for our seventh session.

Career Horizons has been able to generate new opportunities for our youth in the bustling Yonge & Eglinton Area. We continue to provide case management to our youth, as well as additional training such as WHMIS, Smart Serve and Employment Standards. We work with a number of employers who are very supportive of our youth and our programs. Together we can create opportunities for our youth to succeed with their employment goals.

Staff at Career Horizons meet with our youth regularly to address their individual needs. The youth we work with face many obstacles when trying to get and maintain employment, obstacles such as a lack of appropriate interview clothing, job search skills, proper resumes, voicemail, and interview skills. These challenges are addressed within the first three weeks of our eight week program. Securing employment is empowering for our youth. Once our youth get hired it is amazing to witness their increased self-confidence and self-esteem.

We look forward to the fall and winter seasons with our new group and will continue to work with Career Horizons Alumni on an outreach basis.

Karen Curtis
Job Developer/Job Coach

Development News

Horizons for Youth's Third Annual 'Racing for a Reason' Dinner at Woodbine Racetrack

Horizons for Youth's Third Annual 'Racing for a Reason' Dinner raised a grand total of \$41,160 for our shelter in one evening.

For the second straight year, our dinner was held in the Trackside Tent overlooking the renowned E.P. Taylor Turf Course, where guests enjoyed the delights of Executive Chef Joseph Lesch, followed by the horse races.

On behalf of Horizons for Youth's Board of Directors, staff, and most importantly our clients, please let us take this opportunity to recognize all of our donors, for your generous support of *Integrated Asset Management's Third Annual 'Racing for a Reason' Dinner at Woodbine Racetrack*.

Special thank you to Mr. John Robertson for his tremendous work as Chair in making this event a huge success once again! John, we couldn't have done it without you.

Please do not hesitate to contact Keith Clarke at 416.781.9898 ext. 27 or keith@horizonsforyouth.org if you would like to be involved in some capacity for next year's dinner in June.

First Annual Hockey for Horizons Ball Hockey Tournament Raised \$10,628

On May 30th, 2009, a group led by HFY volunteer Justin Herten-Greaven put together a ball hockey tournament at Trinity-Bellwoods Park in support of Horizons for Youth. This first year event featured 12 teams and managed to raise \$10,628 through team registration fees, food and beverage sales and generous donations along the way. Thank you to Justin and his network of family and friends who donated their time, gifts-in-kind and sponsorship. For additional information and/or to register for next year's tournament, please go to www.hockeyforhorizons.ca.

Community Support

Here at Horizons we seldom have ex-residents whom have moved on aimlessly, we have Community Support Clients who are supported until they are sufficiently capable of managing their own lives.

The Community Support Department is booming, as our youth are becoming independent more rapidly, creating a momentum in serving newly housed or referred clients. Our residents are choosing to stay connected by utilizing the offered support services and are also being referred by Horizon's Community Partners and current Community Support clients.

Our clients continue to benefit from services on average each month such as:

TTC Tokens: 46 (**an average of 4 tokens per month**)
Food Packages: 36 (**an average of 2 per month**), Laundry Services @ HFY: 15
Phone Contact: 46, Care Packages: 10, Household Packages: 3, HFY Visits: 40
Accompanied to Appointments: 4, Community Resource Referrals: 24
Eviction Prevention/Landlord Mediation: 8, Counselling: 38
Meals @ HFY: 15, Home Visits: 7, Housing Support: 16

This past summer, community support clients got the chance to congregate on an excursion to Centerville. It was a fun filled day; they reconnected with old friends and made pacts to provide continued support to each other.

Horizons is important to Community Support clients - assistance with landlord mediation or being re-housed have lowered the recidivism of housed clients returning to reside in the shelter system. Our clients are also inspiring each other with Horizons for Youth being a center point of their lives; they have become independent through continued care and celebrate their friendships at community support outings. They are successful together due to the initial help and mutual needs they sought of Horizons for Youth.

Makini McLeod
Community Support Worker



Two teams square off during the 1st Annual Hockey for Horizons ball hockey tournament at Trinity-Bellwoods Park.

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Cirque du Soleil Event Raises \$21,580 for Horizons

Thank you to all those who supported Horizons through purchasing tickets to Cirque du Soleil's performance of 'Ovo' on Friday, September 25th, 2009.

With your charitable donation we managed to raise a grand total of \$21,580 for our shelter. Your generous donation makes us more than just a shelter. Your support ensures that our can complete their education, secure stable employment, obtain safe and secure housing, and have access to assistance and health services.

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL



Thanks to our Corporate and Foundation Donors

May 2009—November 2009

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Horizons for Youth
is proud to be a
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For more information about Horizons for Youth contact:

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Ways to Help Homeless Youth

- **On-line donations** can be made directly from your bank account or credit card. Go to: www.horizonsforyouth.org and click on "Donate Now". Using this method monthly donations can also be made. Horizons makes it simple by issuing one tax receipt at the end of the year, reflecting all your donations.
- **Mail us** your donation to our address listed above.
- **Call us** at 416-781-9898 ext. 27 and ask for Keith Clarke to give a credit card payment over the phone.
- **Donation Drive:** For a list of the most needed items, **please visit our website.** You can directly support our youth by holding a donation drive for items at your work place, in your community, or at an event.
- **Estate Planning:** Bequests can be made in your will. Other planned giving options include: Endowments and Trusts, Securities, Charitable Gift Annuities and Life Insurance Policies.
- **Tribute** a gift in memory of someone or in celebration of a birthday or anniversary.
- **Employer gift match:** Find out from your human resources department if your employer matches employee contributions – challenge them to match your generosity!

Our Mission

Horizons for Youth is dedicated to our mission to shelter, prepare, and guide at-risk youth to be contributing community members. We help them to take responsibility for their lives, make positive choices about their future and establish themselves in the community. In conjunction with community partners, Horizons seeks to identify ways to address the causes and effects of homelessness. We help over 1,100 youth each year.

We do not sell, trade or otherwise share our mailing lists. We hope that you find this newsletter enjoyable and informative. However, if at any time you wish to be removed from this or another mailing, simply contact Keith Clarke by phone at 416-781-9898 ext. 27 or via email at keith@horizonsforyouth.org. Please allow us 15 business days to update our records accordingly.