



Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre

2012 Annual Report

Our Mission

A welcoming community of families supporting each other through diverse programs and resources to build friendships, strengthen our children, and create healthy neighbourhoods.

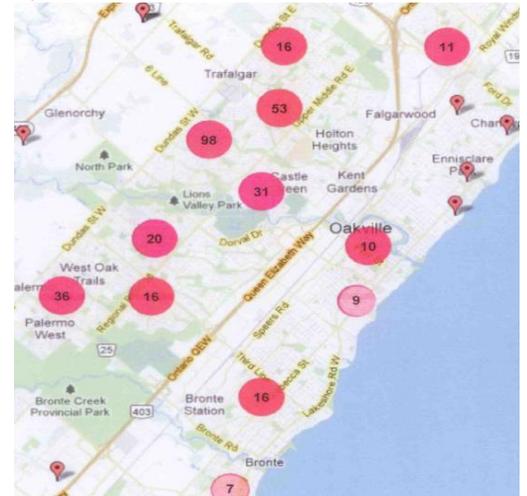
- To relieve poverty by providing basic amenities including food, education, counseling and clothing to families in need.
- To Provide parenting education and support
- To provide educational, recreational, and social opportunities for parents and children of all abilities

We are a community based agency that began almost 13 years ago with 6 women meeting together and last year served 544 families/638 children. We are preparing to move back to our original home at the old Oak Park Builders sales centre to better accommodate our growing numbers at our programs. This space will continue our home away from home type atmosphere that is inviting, non-institutional, barrier free space that is a reflection of the needs, talents and gifts of our neighbours and friends so that it is relevant to the whole community. 88% of our families live in Oakville. 56 families come from Mississauga, Hamilton, Halton Hills, Brampton, Milton, and Burlington.

Our centre has various programs including, multicultural programs (Spanish, Japanese, Filipino South Asian); programs for children with disabilities (Down Syndrome, Autism, ADHD, Asperger's and learning challenges), food bank, community garden, utility bill payments, divorce support group, and support for families with challenges through our Child Development Resource Centre. We run infant, toddler, preschool and school-age programs. We also have an affordable preschool program. We provide free or affordable space to a number of local agencies and businesses to run family programming.

We know that we are achieving our mission when

1. Our members, programs and resources reflect the diversity of our community
2. The community feels welcome in our centre and joins us.
3. People are connecting to others to develop friendships through our programs
4. Parents and children in our community have the supports they need to become the best that they can be
5. Our families work together to build a healthy community



Our Members

26% of our members have moved to Oakville in the last 3 years.

13% are new immigrants to Canada compared 4% in Oakville.

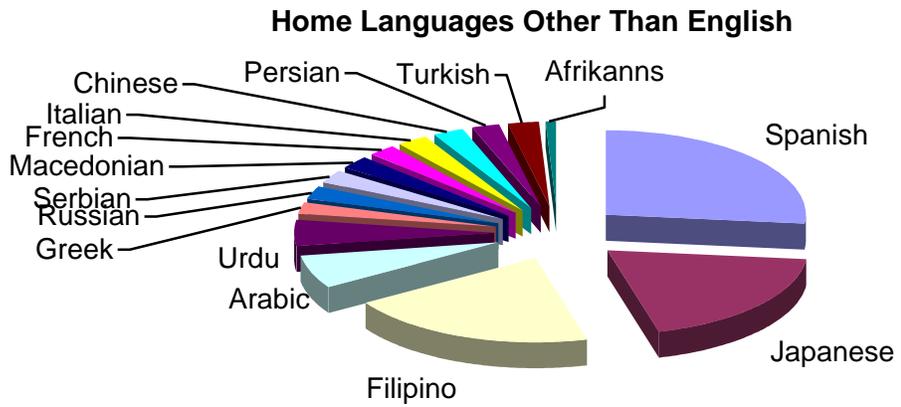
53% were not born in Canada compared with 30% in Oakville.

24% live below the poverty line compared with 8% in Oakville

30% do not speak either official language most often in their homes compared with 11% in Oakville.

(Oakville statistics are from the 2006 Census, Statistics Canada.)

The number of people who have recently moved to Oakville continues to decrease and we suspect this is due to the decrease in new homes built this year. The number of new immigrant families that we are serving has also decreased but we are still well above the Oakville average. Our survey responses speak to our success in attracting a culturally diverse population to our centre.



Positive Impact on the Families we Serve

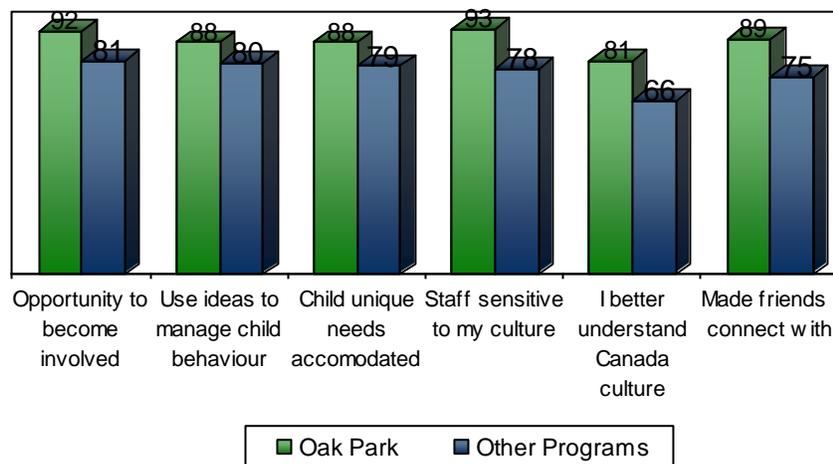
We asked all our members to complete a survey to see if we were meeting our objectives and the needs of our members. We made some changes to last year's survey and added in some new questions for parents who have a child with a special need and also some settlement questions. We continue to see a high level of satisfaction with our programs.

80% or more of Participants Agree

- That they feel welcomed, treated with respect and have opportunities to get involved.
- My child has increased opportunities to play with other children and is more comfortable in social situations.
- We have benefitted from this program.
- I have made friends I can connect with
- I have become more aware of resources in the community
- I feel more supported and confident in my role as parent and I understand my child better
- My child has increased opportunities to play with age-appropriate toys and equipment
- I deal more effectively with day to day challenges and our family has more ideas and ways for getting along
- I use strategies for guiding my child's behaviour I learned at the centre and I use activities at home.

When compared to other Canadian Family Resource Programs, Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre meets or exceeds respondents satisfaction in all areas, except one. We were 3 points lower on the question " I am more aware of what to expect my child to do at this age". This will become one of our priorities for the new year.

Oak Park Survey Responses Compared to other Canadian Family Resource Program Responses



Funding Overview

We increased our income in all areas this year and kept our spending in check so that we have been able to cover the application and renovation costs of our future new home. We are ending this year with a small surplus for the first time in many years and have a sustainability plan which will serve us well into the future. We wrote a record 40 funding proposals this year. We would like to thank our major funders for making it possible for us to serve our community- Trillium Foundation, Bell Canada, Charis Foundation, Oakville Community Foundation, P. Kenney, Oakville Kiwanis, The May Court Club, Encore Cinemas, The Meeting House and TransCanada Pipelines.

Examining The Evidence

Our survey responses show that we are meeting the needs of the community and that we reflect the diversity of our community. Participants value our centre and our programs. The surveys show that we are having a positive impact on families. We are fulfilling our mission, on target for our fundraising plans, and our objectives are reflective of what our participants want. We were able to meet all of our goals set last year.

Recommendations For What's Next?

- To increase the participation by parents and children in the day to day activities at our centre.
- To increase rental and business income
- Ensure we are teaching strategies & activities that parents can use at home
- Ensure we are helping parents & caregivers understand what are appropriate expectations for their child's age.
- Find volunteer front desk staff to answer phone
- Ensure participants know how they can help at the centre
- Increasing membership income
- Set up a building & grounds committee to find volunteer maintenance people.

Thank you to all our members, partners and funders for their active involvement in every aspect of Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre. We could not manage to do what we do without an amazing group of people pitching in.