

Executive Director Report
May 2008

LEADERSHIP IS ACTION NOT POSITION

Submitted by Sherry Kully 2007 Alumnus Leadership Edmonton to April Newslette4r

All successful people became successful,
because they gave some talent or ability
in the service of others.

You can contribute in some way to
others, no matter how small your talent.
You too, can become successful.

No one achieves success without being of
service.

Successful people don't use others,
other people use the successful, for above
all success is of service.

Everyone has to be someone to someone
to be anyone.
Service is the essence of success.

Author Unknown

Community Options continued its tradition of leadership in service to others in 2007, despite unexpected and almost overwhelming challenges. One struggle was created through the loss of anticipated funding in support of Parent-Child Connection Programs in 2006. Another major setback when a funding application to Edmonton Housing Trust Fund was declined, resulting in financial deficit. In April 2007, the roof of the Inglewood Annex became unsound structurally, forcing the closure of the Community Options Outreach and Resource programs and forcing the relocation of the Edmonton Northwest Out-of-School Care program and the Inglewood Come to Lunch program. The relocation resulted in a much smaller school age program, and the hot lunch program became a "top up" program due to lack of appropriate food preparation facilities in the school. The Inglewood school children continued to receive fresh fruit and vegetables and other products to supplement their lunch, but a full hot lunch was no longer possible. The Edmonton Northwest Preschool Child Care was also impacted by the closure, as their food was previously prepared at the Annex as well. As a result, the child care centre now has a cook and food

preparation facility onsite. A special thank you is deserved by those staff who worked through the turmoil of closing programs, comforting community members who felt the loss of these programs, and eventually sorting, packing and moving equipment out of the annex, while still grieving the loss of many beloved programs, which they has helped to build and support.

Another unexpected announcement in 2007 was that the Early Childhood Options contract through Alberta Children's Service, Region 6, was to be put up to tender in 2008. Community Options has held this contract for 20 years, and hopes to continue to work in partnership with the government and community in providing this service.

Despite these upheavals, our established programs continued to set a standard of excellence in provision of various early childhood services and the Society is mending and rebuilding from this strength. . As noted in the introductory quote, success is being of service to others, and our program staff have continued to shine with through their commitment to the children and families they serve.

The Board of Directors became involved with the programs and services at a much more operational level during this year, in order to help the Society weather the storm. They are to be commended for their dedication to Community Options.

We owe many heartfelt thanks to our various funders as well. In particular, the City of Edmonton Family and Community Support Services, which helped fund many of the outreach programs that closed down, stood by the Society and offered guidance and support to the Board as they began the recovery process, after the Annex closed. Our hot lunch program was completely funded through the community with the generous support of the Plumber and Pipefitters Union, as well as Churchill Retirement Community??, Carole-Bea Claney???, Daughters of the Nile, the Cosmopolitan Club, and BMO charities??. Our major funders, Alberta Education and Region 6, Alberta Children's Services should also be thanked, as they helped ensure the continuing existence of our community inclusion programs.

Despite a year fraught with unexpected losses, Community Options stood firm though the support of the community, the staff and the Board of Directors and continued to achieve its mission of serving children and families.

Sincerely,
Margaret Golberg
Executive Director

