A Message from Our CEO

2015 was a special year for Closer to Home, as we reflected on 20 years of learning and growing into the dynamic agency we are today. More than 50,000 people have walked through our doors over the years, but what it all comes down to for us is the stories of success and the knowledge that we are actually making a difference for families – that families feel stronger and empowered to move in a positive direction, and that kids have a safe place to call home.

As we kick off 2016, we’ve recognized a critical need for foster homes that will help children and youth reach their full potential. Last year, CTH had many foster families who accepted children into their own home, providing a stable, nurturing and therapeutic environment for children experiencing trauma. It’s a living scenario that is intended to be temporary – a bridge for a child from a crisis situation to a permanent home – with the ultimate goal of family reunification whenever possible, or finding a new home for children through adoption.

We think of children like Sam*, a now 20-year-old social work student who was placed into a CTH foster home at the young age of 7. Although his transition into foster care was challenging, it gave Sam the commitment and stability he needed while his mom worked hard to have him permanently return to her. We know there are many more children like Sam, who need to know they are loved and supported even when they’re going through the most difficult time in their lives.

Our foster care program is just one of the many services that we hope will continue to empower families in Calgary and surrounding areas this year. We couldn’t do it without your help. Your support, whether as a volunteer, a donor or simply as a caring community member, does not go unnoticed. Together, we’ve accomplished so much over the past 20 years, and we’re excited to share the journey with you as we continue to build a legacy of hope for those who need services close to their home and in their community.

* Name Changed

- Karen Olivier, Chief Executive Officer

You did it! Thank you!

A special thank you to all our donors for once again coming together and supporting families during the Christmas season through our annual Adopt-a-Family campaign.

Presented by McQuiston Executive Wealth Group, Adopt-a-Family supported 236 children across 96 families this year, and more than $64,000 in gifts were donated.

It was a challenging year for many local families and your support made a huge difference to all of them. A special thank you to Calgary Academy students, staff and parents, who amazed us with their continuing support. We deeply appreciate the generosity of our donors and volunteers, and we wanted to share with you some words of gratitude from the families you helped:

Looking for a Fun Way to Support CTH?

Community Fundraising (CF): Do you believe in CTH, and want to help spread the word about what we do and raise some dollars in the process? It can be as simple as a bake sale or bottle drive, or as complex as a gala. No matter the size, the revamped CF program now offers you support in marketing, promotion, design, and presentations. Please visit our website to learn more.

Donate-a-Car: CTH is now an official charity partner for Donate-a-Car, which means you can donate your car to charity. The service is available for cars in all conditions, and even offers free towing and a tax receipt!

Agents of Change: Know someone who is buying or selling their home? Did you know they can now be custom-matched with a real estate agent and have the agent’s commission directly benefit CTH – at no cost to the buyer/seller?

Sponsor Energy: Use your power for good! Sponsor Energy offers competitively-priced gas and electricity for commercial and residential properties, with 50% of profits being redirected back to CTH’s programs. Take part in a special workshop that will teach you how to read your bills and save money! Details coming soon.

If you would like to know more about organizing a fundraising event or other ways to support Closer to Home please visit our website www.closertohome.com or call Karolina at (403) 543-0550 Ext. 235 or email her at kciezar@closertohome.com.
Community Support Gives Hope in a Difficult Economy

It’s a situation many Calgary families are currently facing: unanticipated job loss coupled with unexpected expenses, like the rising cost of groceries.

A single mom of three kids, Sophia* found herself facing extreme financial strain after she lost her job. With the holidays quickly approaching, she worried she wouldn’t be able to give her children the Christmas they deserved. When she heard her children talking about what the other kids at school would be doing over the holidays, she found herself unable to even think about buying a turkey or preparing a special meal this year. She couldn’t afford to give her children the things they needed, let alone the things they wanted.

That’s when she reached out to Closer to Home for help.

Now that she’d seen the generosity of her community, Sophia felt safe telling Closer to Home staff that she was having a difficult time providing healthy lunches for her kids. She was heartbroken when she received a note from her children’s teachers about the lack of food in their lunches compared to other children.

Despite doing everything she could under intense financial pressure, the ever-increasing costs at the grocery store meant full and balanced lunches were out of her reach.

Closer to Home’s staff connected Sophia with the Brown Bagging program, a partnership with Brown Bagging for Calgary’s Kids. The program, designed to address the basic needs of community members while building community connection and engagement, has helped Sophia supplement her children’s lunches on a weekly basis.

Sophia was relieved that her kids were getting healthy foods and were no longer struggling to learn with rumbling tummies.

For detailed Job Descriptions and to apply please visit the Career section on our website at www.closertohome.com

Join Our Team!

Foster Parent

This permanent full-time position, in Calgary or Airdrie, works closely with a team of professionals to support youth to successfully integrate back into their families and communities.

Method of Payment:
☐ I would prefer to use my credit card.
☐ My cheque made payable to “Closer to Home Community Services” is enclosed.

Questions? Contact us at (403) 543-0550 Ext 250.

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Closer to Home would like to recognize our supporters from the last quarter (Oct 1, 2015 - Dec 31, 2015)

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and Christa Arseneault • Stevenson-Roluk Family • Striker Exploration Corp. • Vina Goghari

I would like to make a MONTHLY GIFT of:
☐ $300/mth ☐ $250/mth ☐ $150/mth ☐ $100/mth ☐ $50/mth ☐ Other $ ____/mth

OR, here is my SINGLE GIFT of:
☐ $500 ☐ $250 ☐ $100 ☐ $50 ☐ $25 ☐ Other $ ______________

Name ________________________________

City ____________________________ Prov ______________ Postal Code ______________

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