Each year, Closer to Home connects generous donors with families in need of support during the holiday season. Donors hit the stores to shop for everything from basic necessities like winter coats, bedding, and pots and pans, to a fun new toy that will light up a child’s eyes on Christmas morning.

Last year, our donors gave 325 local families a magical Christmas.

One of those families was Jana’s*. Jana is a single mother who is caring for her three children. Last year, she was struggling to put food on the table for her family.

“I couldn’t even imagine how I was going to give the kids a Christmas,” she said at the time.

Jana came to us for help two weeks before Christmas. Thankfully, we still had enough donors to support her and the kids.

We matched her with two of our financial donors, and our volunteers headed out to the stores on their behalf to shop for the family’s wish list items.

“It was amazing to see [the children] act like kids again and delight in their gifts,” Jana said about Christmas morning. “They really believed in the magic of Christmas and couldn’t believe they would be so lucky.”

*Name changed to protect identity

Continued on Page 2
At my child’s parent/teacher interview at school, I received some information that I wasn’t expecting. How can I be an effective advocate for my child during the next parent/teacher interview?

As a parent and foster parent myself, I understand how it can be surprising to hear information about your child that you were not expecting at a parent/teacher meeting.

Moving forward, here are a few ideas for working with the teacher to effectively help your child.

First, always be honest and open with the teacher. You want the teacher to know that you are there to support them, and that you want to work together as a team in the best interest of your child.

Second, ask for another meeting to discuss the issue in more detail and to make a communication plan that works for you and the teacher. I ask teachers to contact me immediately regarding any issue with my child, no matter how small, and not to wait for a conference to share things with me. Depending on the severity of the information you received, you can also set up two to three scheduled meetings throughout the year.

At these meetings, you can introduce your child on a personal level. Share some things that your child is doing really well, any challenges or new things happening at home. I share strategies with the teacher to effectively work with my child on this issue and ask them to use the same methods at school. This consistency can be very positive for a child.

So, in a nutshell: honesty, teamwork, ongoing communication and consistency.

- Marla, Foster Parent for Closer to Home

Send your question to jmelnychuk@closetohome.com and it may be featured in our next newsletter!

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Today, Jana and the children are doing much better. Things are still challenging, but the support they received last Christmas and throughout the year has given them hope.

As demand for Adopt-a-Family continues to grow – it’s gone from supporting 86 families to 325 over the last five years – our donors have stepped up to ensure that every family member has a gift to open on Christmas Day.

From the local businesses whose employees rallied together as a team to support families, to the extended families who decided to give to other families in greater need than their own, to the children who were so excited to shop for other kids who wouldn’t have as much as they did on Christmas morning, Adopt-a-Family would not be possible without the generosity of our family of donors.

Want to be a part of the magic? Sign up by December 4th at www.closertohome.com/adopt-a-family.

* Name changed to protect privacy
TOP REASONS I KNOW I’M READY TO BE A FOSTER PARENT

1. I have talked with my family about what it means to be a Foster Family and we are all supportive of it.

2. I understand that a child may only be in my home temporarily.

3. I understand there is an assessment process and training involved to become a Foster Parent.

4. I am willing to be flexible with my schedule.

5. I understand that I would be part of a team, and that Closer to Home provides me with training and 24 hour support.

6. I have watched Closer to Home’s Foster Parent videos and I am excited to start the process!

To start the process of becoming a Foster Parent, please call (403) 543-0550.

To view the videos, please visit our website at www.closertohome.com and click the YouTube icon.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SHAW BIRDIES FOR KIDS DONORS!

$45,011 RAISED  90 KIDS SENT TO CAMP
Thank You to all our donors and volunteers for supporting Closer to Home this past quarter (July 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018).

Our Donors in the last quarter:

Volunteer Highlights:
Thank you to Jennelle Giong and the contestants from Miss Asia Calgary 2018 for volunteering at Summer in the City in July.
We are grateful to Dennis, Nicole and their team of employees from Imperial for their ongoing support. The paint job at Pekewe House looks amazing! Thank you for braving the snow to help us out.

Join Our Team
FOSTER PARENT
This full-time live-in position (24 hours a day) in your own home for an individual or couple looking to have a positive and lasting impact on children and their families.

Foster Parents’ primary objective is to provide specialized treatment oriented family based care for children who may otherwise be placed in more structured programs, follow all legislative and agency mandated policies and procedures involved in the care of foster children, as well as participate fully in the process of family reunification, if appropriate.

Adopt-a-Family Volunteers
Adopt-a-Family volunteers will work with Closer to Home (CTH) staff to organize gifts for low-income families during our annual Adopt-a-Family initiative. The Volunteer will be based at the CTH office, helping with administrative tasks, sorting gift packages in preparation for delivery to families, loading vehicles and more.

For detailed job descriptions and more career and volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at www.closertohome.com.

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YES, I WOULD LIKE TO EMPOWER FAMILIES TO STAY TOGETHER!

I would like to make a MONTHLY GIFT of:
☐ $100/mth  ☐ $25/mth  ☐ $10/mth  ☐ Other ___/mth
OR, here is my SINGLE GIFT of:
☐ $500  ☐ $200  ☐ $75  ☐ Other ___

Name ____________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________________________
City ___________________ Prov ___ Postal Code ____________
Phone # ___________________________ Email __________________________
☐ Please sign me up to receive the CTH quarterly newsletter by email instead of mail.

Method of Payment:
☐ My cheque made payable to “Closer to Home Community Services” is enclosed.
☐ I would prefer to use my credit card.
   We will call you to process your donation through CanadaHelps. Ph: ____________________
☐ I would like to remain anonymous, please do not recognize my name in the Donor Recognition section of CTH publications such as this quarterly newsletter.

Please return your completed form to:
3507A 17 Ave SW Calgary, Alberta T3E 0B6
Or fax your completed form to (403) 246-6406
Questions? Contact us at (403) 543-0550 Ext. 250

You can also make your contribution online at www.closertohome.com just click the DONATE button.

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