



THE JUNE CALLWOOD CENTRE  
FOR YOUNG WOMEN

# CREATING COMMUNITY

2017 - 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



## Message from the Executive Director and Board of Directors

Over the last year, Jessie's Centre has continued to work to enrich and improve the lives of pregnant teens, young parents, and their children. It is a complex and challenging undertaking. But as this report makes clear, the way we care for these young parents and their families is the key to our many successes. It is the strength of the community at Jessie's that makes all the difference.

I have had the great pleasure and opportunity to be the Chair of this organization for the past year, so I have witnessed firsthand the accomplishments of our leaders, staff and participants: including the amazing Regent Park radio program, the collaboration with The Lullaby Project, a neighbourhood fundraising event and the everyday work in the classroom, the parent and child centre and the kitchen. So much of our success this year was achieved in partnership with others!! Working together, we have demonstrated continued progress in building and improving programs that provide support in housing, health, and education and nurture the healthy development of pregnant teenagers and young families.

Jessie's great work continues to be recognized through major ongoing funding and grants from the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services and the United Way. This past year has been difficult because we have had to deal with a funding transformation across the GTA and in the Province. We have had to be creative in finding ways to continue to provide quality services for our participants in the face of more and more funding pressure. However, I have great confidence that

Jessie's will succeed in this new environment because we weather these changes together, with the support of the amazing community that lives and grows here at Jessie's and the support of the amazing broader Toronto community.

On behalf of the board of directors and management, I would like to thank the many dedicated staff at the centre and acknowledge the extraordinary contribution and commitment of the volunteers. Our partners and donors have enabled us to provide lots of opportunity for growth and improvement; and for that we are very appreciative. As we all well know, it takes a village... not just to raise a child but also to build family, support individuals and provide that sense of community that is so essential for all of us.

So we want to send a big thank you to our community and to our village; and a big thank you to the participants and children who come to Jessie's. We are so grateful that we get the opportunity to work with you.

**Rebecca Ho**, Chair of the board

**Maritza Sanchez**, Executive Director





# Community Makes Us Stronger!

Jessie's services are robust  
because of you....

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic  
Child Development Institute  
Children's Book Bank  
Elizabeth Fry  
Inner City Health Associates (ICHA)  
Massey Hall  
ME to WE  
METRAC  
Midwives Collective of Toronto  
Mindfulness Without Borders  
Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN)  
Parliament Library  
Planned Parenthood of Toronto  
Rainbow Songs

Radio Regent  
Roy Thompson Hall  
Sister Writes  
St. Michael's Hospital  
Toronto Birthing Centre  
Toronto District School Board  
Toronto Public Health  
Women's Health in Women's Hands  
Youth Employment Service (YES)

# Paola's Story

I came to Jessie's Centre when I was 17 and pregnant. I am a newcomer to Canada, having moved here from Mexico City, and have been living in Toronto for two years. I faced a number of obstacles when I arrived, including no access to free health care, the language barrier and a lack of information on how to access and navigate services in Toronto.

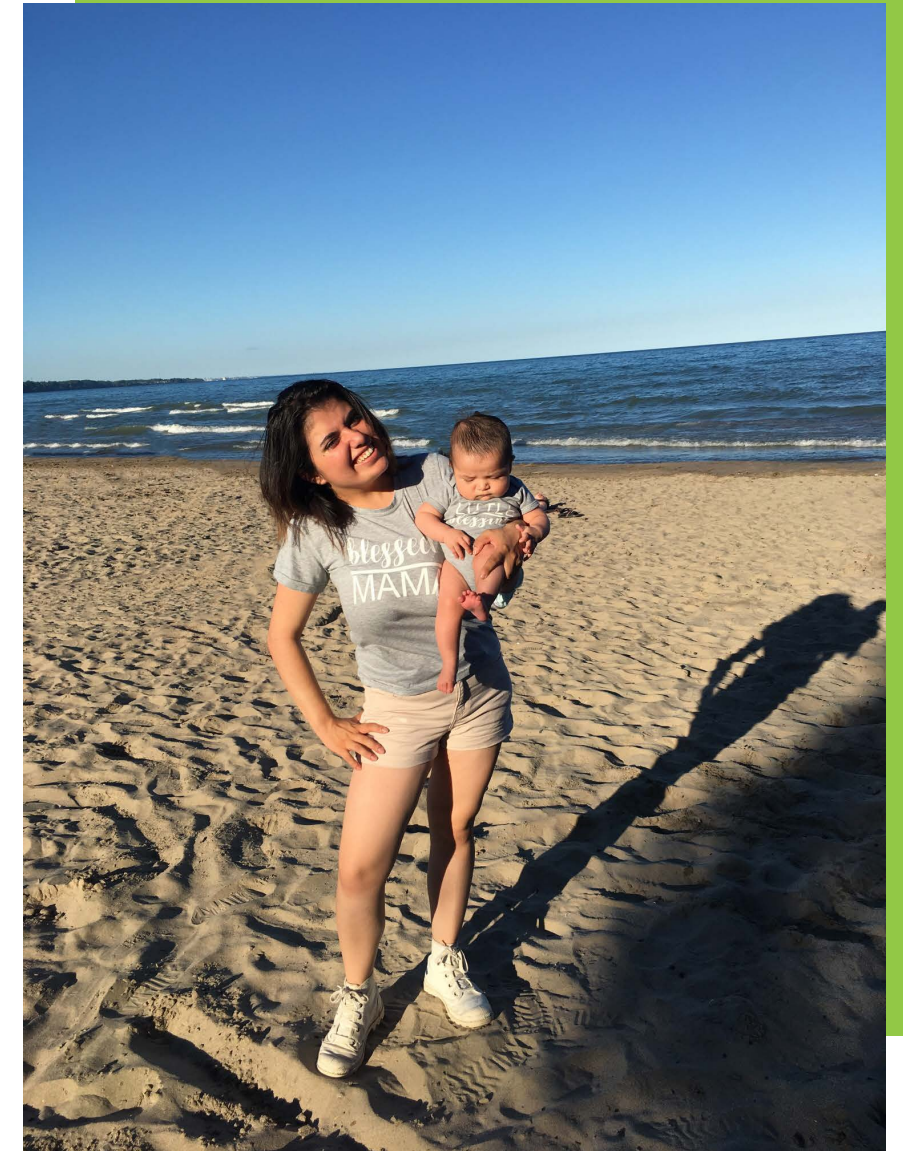
When I made the decision to become a parent I knew that I needed help. At first, I was just looking to meet other young mothers in Toronto because I felt alone. When I googled young parent groups, I found Jessie's website, learned about all their different services and decided that they could help me. I'd been feeling so scared and ashamed with myself for getting pregnant but at Jessie's I quickly felt welcome, was heard and felt that my choice to parent was respected.

During my pregnancy, I attended lots of Jessie's programs including their high school, the Lullaby Project and their Labor Support Program. I achieved my Ontario diploma at Jessie's and I know it has opened many opportunities for me. I'm planning on studying filmmaking at university in the coming year. The Lullaby Project gave me the opportunity to work with great musicians to create my own lullaby for my soon to arrive

baby and the Labor Support program guided me throughout my pregnancy and labour with different pain relief techniques and emotional support.

Throughout my pregnancy, I was told I was expecting a girl. Surprisingly, life gave me boy and on April 8, 2018, Pablo was born. I thought being a parent would be easier than it is. Specifically, my first month as a new parent was extremely hard. I isolated myself and was depressed. However, in a young parents' group I attended at Jessie's, we had a post-partum depression workshop that helped me realize that my depression was something normal and that directed me to supportive resources. Having that support and getting into a daily routine with Pablo really helped me feel better.

Today, I live with my mom, her husband and Pablo. I'm a speaker with Jessie's Community Education program where I share my story with students across Toronto to advocate for young parents. It's a really cathartic experience. Pablo is almost 5 months old and every day, he makes me feel proud to be his mother.



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## Lullaby Project

**The Lullaby Project**, a program of Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute (WMI), offers pregnant women and new mothers in challenging situations an opportunity to create and share a personal lullaby, with the help of local professional artists. The participants are encouraged to explore how they can use music to communicate feelings, hopes, and dreams as they look to the future with their child.

The Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall became a Lullaby Project partner in 2017. For their first project in Canada, ten young mothers from Jessie's, The June Callwood Centre for Young Women, worked with five artists to write, record, and perform ten lullabies that encapsulated their personal experiences with motherhood, with lyrics and melodies full of raw emotion, vulnerability, and love.

“As long as you're in the world  
I'll be on top of the world.  
You're my favourite girl,  
There's nothing I wouldn't do for you.

*Lullabies are available online at [soundcloud.com/soundboardTO](https://soundcloud.com/soundboardTO)*

“This song is dedicated to my lovely Zihadat. I hope every time you hear this song, you'll feel the joy you bring to me. With you, I am on top of the world.”

In the first and second sessions, participants met with project musicians for creative sessions. Participants were invited draw upon personal journals, letters they have written to their babies, and their own musical memories to create an original lullaby for one or more of their children. The creative process of songwriting improves maternal health and the mother-child bond for pregnant women and new mothers experiencing challenging life situations.

The recording sessions were held at Revolution Studios. In this third session, participants worked with performers, composers, and arrangers to refine and record their lullaby and prepare for the big reveal.

On December 2017, we held the listening and sharing session at the Centuries bar and lounge where family and guests heard these lullabies for the first time. It was an amazing and emotional experience that highlighted the courage, strength, and resiliency in these ten young women. Every lullaby was unique and powerful, with a story within itself. Through music, we had the privilege to see them and the world around them in a different light. Lullabies truly are magic!

We would like to thank Massey Hall and Roy Thompson Hall for selecting Jessie's, The June Callwood centre for Young Women as the first project in Canada.



# We are Powerful by Nature

In September 2017, Jessie's launched Powerful by Nature, a community radio show run by Jessie's youth in partnership with Radio Regent. Guided by our feminist values and the mantra popularized by the disability justice movement, "Nothing About Us, Without Us", Powerful by Nature was meant to be a platform for young parents to advocate and talk about the issues that matter most to them and their communities. We wanted the show to allow young parents to speak for themselves and to their experiences honestly without feeling shame or judgement.

Since our launch, we have produced 16 shows talking about topics from intimate partner violence and affordable housing to youth homelessness and self-care. We have interviewed dozens of community members, leaders, artists and advocates and reached hundreds of listeners. Every show has been written and hosted by a rotating team of incredible Jessie's participants who have gained advocacy, leadership and media production experience.

When Jeneace started participating in Powerful by Nature, she'd never been on the radio before and was anxious about hosting a live radio show without knowing who would be listening. Today, she interviews guests with confidence and isn't afraid to advocate for the social change she wants to see happen. When asked why she does the show Jeneace said, "Powerful by Nature gets our voices heard. It's an important outlet and platform for us." Her experience with Powerful by Nature encouraged her to continue with her advocacy and today, she's sitting on a youth advisory board of the non-profit Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights.

You can listen to Powerful by Nature live, every other Monday at 4pm on radioregent.com



# Our Program Impact

in 2017-2018

 **24**  
Enrolled in our School Program

 **295**  
Children cared for in the Parent Child Centre

 **21**  
Youth in Leadership Building programs

 **308**  
Youth receiving services at Jessie's

 **888**  
Community Referrals

 **261**  
Youth attended prenatal


 **6000**  
Meals served

 **10**  
Live Radio Shows with 1000 listeners

 **131**  
Community Education Presentations to 4645 youth & community members

 **136**  
Well Woman & Well Baby visits

 **30**  
Families accessed respite services

 **5233**  
Counselling sessions

 **91**  
Youth receiving housing stabilization supports

 **222**  
Youth attended parenting groups

 **36**  
Volunteers dedicating 5600 hours



## The TDSB Classroom at Jessie's

We are grateful to have celebrated another successful school year in the Jessie's classroom, with four graduates. While our students' successes are theirs, the joy is collective, and reverberates throughout the centre.

The school program strives to be a place where students feel included, represented, valued and challenged. Part of this involves ensuring they have opportunities to see themselves as part of the wider world, as strong young women who have a crucial voice in shaping possibilities for themselves, their children and their communities. To this end, we foster community partnerships and engage in community events, and find ways to tie in this work to the curriculum; so that school learning has a deep and genuine connection to real life learning.

We began last September by participating in Take Back the Night, where students used their voices as racialized and marginalized young women/parents. They made posters for the rally as part of their English course that focused on creating a graphic text. This was followed a few weeks later by our March around the Regent Park neighbourhood, celebrating World Breastfeeding Week. Preparations for the March

were tied into our Grade 11 Parenting course.

For Black history month, students wrote poetry about their neighbourhoods, inspired by the novel Scarborough by local author Catherine Hernandez. Students performed their poems/spoken word and Catherine came in to talk about her experiences as a queer woman of colour; parent, activist and author. She loved their poems. Dionne Brand, Governor General Award winning poet, and recipient of the Order of Canada, also wrote a special message about the meaning of Home. She wrote it specifically for us which was read aloud by one of our students.

Finally, Julia Huys, a lawyer and youth advocate from Justice for Children and Youth, provided a workshop to students about how to access justice: she answered student questions around family law, access, custody and parental rights.

We are at capacity again this semester, and look forward to ensuring inclusivity for our students beyond our classroom and into the wider communities.

## Pathways to Employment

### Community Economic Development Program

Since the Community Economic Development Program (CED) began in 2015, more than 40 young women have participated in this unique job training program where they have gained the skills necessary to secure employment. Many who come to the program have little to no job experience, so securing employment can be difficult. In the three years that the CED program has been operating at Jessie's, we have made improvements to better equip participants for the labour market. These include adding training sessions from partnering organizations such as Youth Employment Services, Next Steps Employment Centre, and Dixon Hall; as well as increasing leadership opportunities by involving participants in the co-facilitation of training sessions for new trainees; and lastly, providing one to one support with resume writing and interview skills. In 2017, over 90% of CED participants obtained full time employment.



### Social Enterprise - All About Kindness program

The All About Kindness program at Jessie's is Ontario's first non-profit Birth Doula services provided by young mothers who face barriers to employment. These young women go through intensive training through DONA international. All About Kindness is generously funded by organizations like the Toronto Enterprise Fund and the Canadian Women's Foundation. Diandra Samuels, a certified Birth Doula and first success story of the All About Kindness program, is a perfect example of what makes our program unique. Diandra came to Canada at 15 and, three months later, learned that she was pregnant. She gave birth to her son all by herself only to learn about Jessie's one month after her son was born. Diandra endured isolation and suffered through post-partum depression; however, her resilience and drive to learn meant she was determined to pursue an education. When Diandra learned about the All About Kindness program, she was thrilled. She saw the program as an opportunity to help other mothers, living in isolation, with the support she never had. Not only did she successfully complete her Birth Doula certification but she's currently enrolled in her second year of the Police Foundation course at Centennial College. Her biggest motivation and role model is her son - Dwayne.



## Children Learn Through Play in the Parent-Child Centre

The Parent and Child Centre is the heart and soul of Jessie's. This past year, we incorporated new components into the current program, which focuses on the interest of the individual child and includes parents as active members of the teaching team. We believe that every child is a competent and capable communicator and we encourage them to express themselves in many ways. Connection and community are crucial at the PCC because we know children experience a sense of belonging when they are connected to others. Through these forms of teaching, every child is allowed to develop a sense of self, health and well-being.

Learning stories are used as a form of observation and documentation and are written as narratives. To create learning stories, the educator watches and listens as

children explore through play. The educator takes photographs or video, jots down notes, and creates a story about what she has seen, to share with children and their families. Educators incorporate learning stories into the daily program and these are written for the children (in simple form) and are easy for educators to write and in turn easy for parents to read and understand.

Both Parent and Child feel a sense of belonging when they are made to feel confident and in control of learning opportunities. This form of guiding children's learning opportunities provides a holistic picture of the child's development.

## Volunteer Spotlight



**This is Natalie.** She's 23, smart, witty, loves to clean and always has a positive attitude. She also has Asperger's syndrome or what she and her community call "Aspie's". Natalie has volunteered at Jessie's for 6 years in our kitchen program. She came to Jessie's through a real world work placement program at her high school. After she graduated, she decided to come back and continue her volunteer placement in our kitchen. Natalie loves to cook and she never misses a shift. If we ever need extra hands for an event, she is always ready and willing to step up and help out wherever she is needed.

When asked what she enjoys most about volunteering here, she says "What immediately comes to mind, it's such a relaxed environment. Everyone is always so friendly and talks to each other as though they are friends and not just colleagues". Natalie also says "Jessie's is a solid structure I can really count on; always getting to do the same thing and that gives me a sense of comfort; the predictability of my routine and that's a trait of some Aspie's that we thrive on routine and we don't like changes."

At Jessie's, we highly value and appreciate all of our 80+ volunteers, from the ones who come weekly to the ones who come just for one day. Volunteers are an integral part of why Jessie's is able to provide so many supports for pregnant teenagers, young parents and their children. We couldn't do it without them.



# Summary of Revenue and Expenses

April 2017 to March 2018

## REVENUE

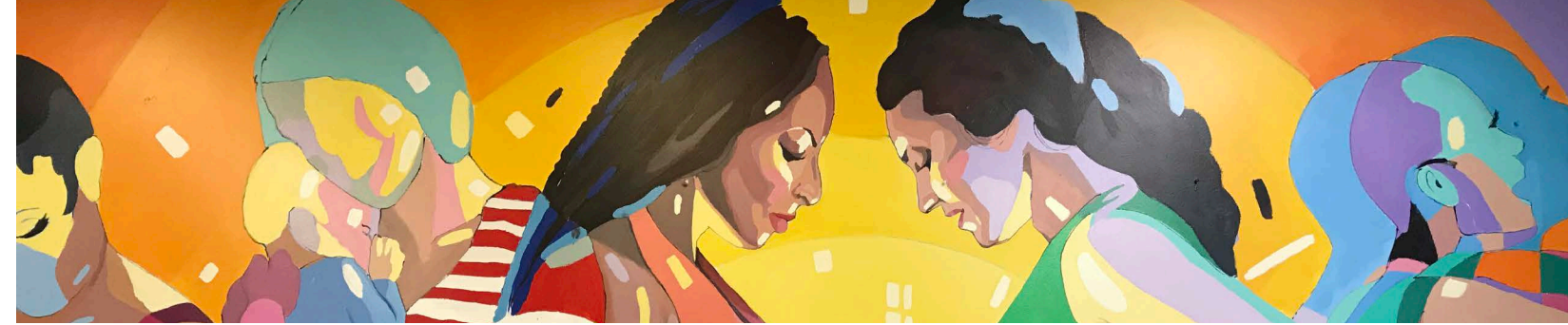
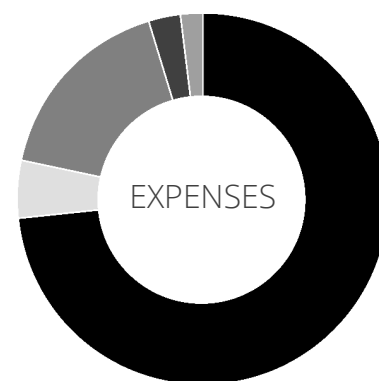
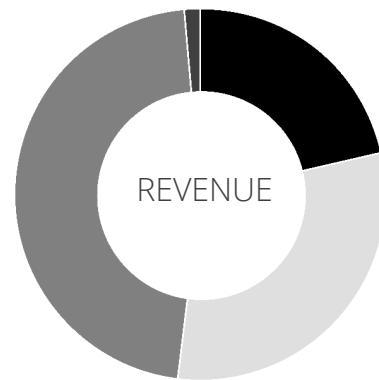
Donations	\$ 324,788.00
United Way Toronto	\$ 460,252.00
Government Grants	\$ 702,010.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 19,278.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,506,328.00</b>

## EXPENSES

Programs	\$ 1,064,186.16
Operations	\$ 73,606.00
Administration	\$ 244,412.68
Fundraising	\$ 42,551.92
Volunteer	\$ 24,957.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,449,714.00</b>

## RESTRICTED FUNDS

Casey Frayne Fund	\$ 20,933.00
Endowment Fund	\$ 33,402.00
Scholarship Fund	\$ 50,000.00
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 243,232.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 347,567.00</b>



Thank you to our 2017-2018 donors.  
Your contribution ensures our success.

### \$10,000 - \$40,000

- Barrick Gold Corporation
- E.W. Bickle Foundation
- Innoweave
- J.P. Bickell Foundation
- Ontario Realtors Care Foundation
- Slaight Family Foundation
- The Arthur and Audry Cutten Foundation
- The Alva foundation
- The Canadian Women's Foundation
- The Cooperators
- The Toronto Social Enterprise
- TJX Canada

### \$5,000-\$9,999

- Cadillac Fairview
- J.W. McConnell Foundation
- Shoppers Drug Mart - LOVE YOU
- Traquair Family Foundation

### \$100-\$499

- Adamson Lee, Alama Pearlman, Andrew Townsend, Anglican Church Women's Guild, Ann Lacey, Arden Vaughan, Barbara Evan, Barbara Poole, Cheryl Wagner, Claudia Rogers, Claudio Coronel, Connie Flewitt, Debi Levy, Duncan Kemp, Elaine Harris, Elizabeth Shields, Garry Norman, Ian Sowton, Irene Withers, J. Shum, Jaclyn Mlotek, Jamieson Williams, Jane Matthews, Jennifer Bland, Jessica Anderson, Josephine McMillen, Judith McCormack, Judy Tobe, Kathryn Manning, Kimberly Yeung, Laura Hunter, Lettie Gariba, Marian Norgrove, Marianne Kennedy, Michael Meagher, Michael Varey, Miriam Kaufman, Nadia Shabaz, Nancy Gray, Natalie Lavecchia, Natasha Laing, Natasha Macparland, Nell Hotke, Nicole C. Roberto, Parveen Sachdeva, Patricia Wright, Peter Williamson, PricewaterhouseCooper's, RBC Insurance, Rebecca Ho, Rosemary Barnes, Ruth Hudson, Sarah Davis, Sasha Rana, Sherry McGratten, Sophie Chung, Steven Astristis, The Big Carrot Natural Foods Market, Ursula Mausberg, McLellan Wendy, Yujia Zhu

### \$1,000-\$4,999

- Angela Ryan
- Chum Charitable Foundation
- CIBC Mellon
- Connor Gordon
- David Lewis
- David Reed
- Gary Grad
- IBM Canada Charitable Foundation
- Jane Ravenshaw
- Jennifer & Michael Wilson
- Joanne M. Prince
- John & Marian Taylor Family Fund at Toronto Foundation
- Just for Laughs
- K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
- Leslie Riley
- The George Lunan Foundation
- The McLean Foundation

### \$500-\$999

- 2400464 Ontario Limited
- Anne Layton
- AutoDesk
- Cavalluzzo LLP
- Charlene Watters
- CIBC Children's Foundation
- Credit Canada Debt Solutions
- Herbert Wong Medicine
- Holy Trinity Anglican Church
- Jessica Haines
- John Howard Society of Toronto
- Jonathan Maier
- Judith Keene
- Lauren Butti
- Linda Rapson
- Michael Daum
- Ryerson University
- Tavanberg Communication
- TELUS
- Women Together

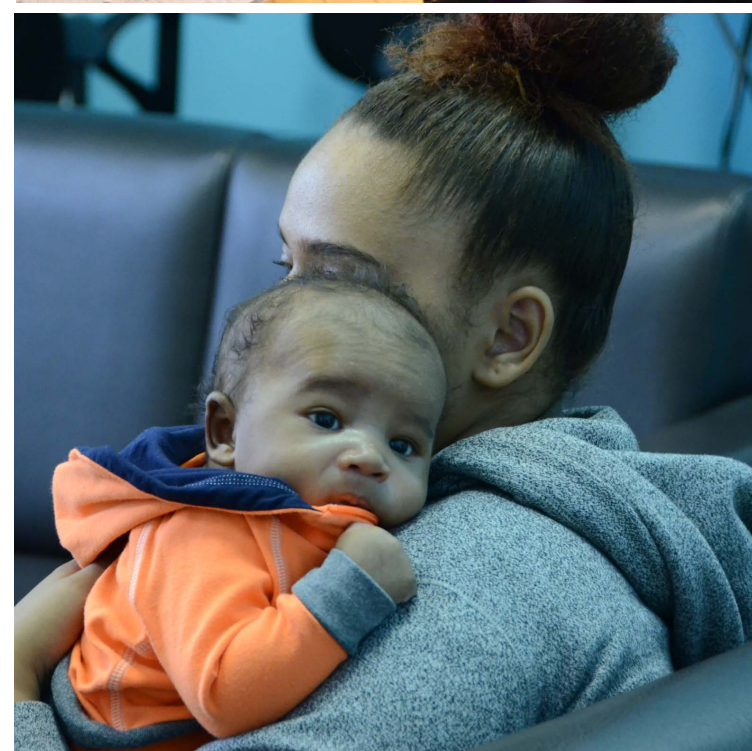
# Board and Staff

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Arlene Nichols, Administrative Assistant  
Beth Poulin, Food Program Coordinator  
Deirdre McKibbon, Parent Child Development Worker  
Elisa Wilmot, Parent-Child Centre Lead  
Faith Hatchett, Registered Nurse  
Hodan Osman, Counsellor/Case Manager  
Iris Humphrey, Housing Access Counsellor  
Joanna Mendez, Program Manager  
Judy Tobe, Development Associate  
Julia Hrivnak, Food Program Assistant  
Linda Gallant, Infant-Child Worker  
Lynn Murphy, Teacher  
Miesi Makundika, Infant-Child Worker  
Natalie Sgambelluri, Respite Care Coordinator  
Regi Magaly, Counsellor/Case Manager  
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Sherry Rutter, Community Economic Development Coordinator  
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THE JUNE CALLWOOD CENTRE  
FOR YOUNG WOMEN



WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES IN  
**PEEL, TORONTO  
& YORK REGION**

Jessie's - The June Callwood Centre for Young Women

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[jessiescentre.org](http://jessiescentre.org)

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