



Nellie's Newsletter

Nellie's Mission

Our Mission is to operate programs and services for women and children who have and are experiencing oppressions such as violence, poverty and homelessness. Nellie's is a community based feminist organization which operates within an anti-racist, anti-oppression framework. We are committed to social change through education and advocacy, to achieve social justice for all women and children.

Feb 2007 , Issue #21

Message from the Executive Director

I want to begin this first message as Nellie's Executive Director by expressing my sincere appreciation for the warm welcome I have received from staff, board, residents and the community at large.

Life at Nellie's is so fast paced that there's no time to feel "newly arrived" for long. A few weeks after I started working, I participated in a full-day welcoming and orientation session for nine volunteers that will be working along staff in 2006 – 2007.



Welcome Rebecca Rogers, Nellie's new Program Manager

The search for a Program Manager was another project that occupied my time. I'm happy to announce that Rebecca Rogers has been hired for the position. Rebecca has been working in women's anti-

violence services for 11 years. Before joining Nellie's team, Rebecca was the Residential Program Manager at Marianne's Place – Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis. She has been very involved and active in the community on issues of social justice, violence and oppression, and brings a feminist, anti-racist/anti-oppression structure to her work.

There were plenty end-of-the-year festive celebrations to plan. This year, a group of students from George Brown



Welcome to Nellie's Volunteers 2006-07!!!

College took on the task of helping us hold a great dinner and party. Many thanks to all our generous friends and donors who helped provide special food, programs and gifts to all our program participants and shelter residents. I also want to thank all our funders and community members whose ongoing support enhances Nellie's ability to respond to requests for services.

Our computer system and equipment were upgraded and funding for staff training was made available thanks to the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the City of Toronto, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration.

We closed the year by completing Nellie's Strategic Planning Project for the years 2007 to 2009. Beth Jordan and Dionne Falconer lead the project that will guide Nellie's work in the next three years. I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of our participants, partners, staff, volunteers and funders that took the time to participate in this project that will keep us focused on our work while moving towards achieving Nellie's Mission Statement.

Join us over the next few months as we celebrate Black History Month in February and the lunar (Chinese) New Year. In March, we will be marching in support of women at International Women's Week, as well as hosting "Awakenings 2007," our fourth annual International Women's Day fundraising dance held in partnership with the Assaulted Women's Helpline on March 9 at St Lawrence Hall. In time for mother's day in May, Nellie's will again be participating in the provincial "Daisy of Hope Campaign". May 24 is Jazz it Up, Nellie's signature fundraising event. Back by popular demand, the evening will feature a powerful musical performance by the one-and-only Jackie Richardson. Please come and join us in the many events we are hosting in the coming months. Your support is our success. For more information call us or visit our website.

Justice and equity,

Millennium Goals, from Global to Local

By Erica Opoku, Board Member; and Margarita Mendez, Executive Director

In the fall of 2000, the United Nations General Assembly met to establish eight primary goals that would help to create a better world by 2015. The eight goals are:



1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development



MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

www.makepovertyhistory.ca

Canada is among the 191 countries that adopted the Millennium Development Goals. As the deadline draws closer, is Canada any closer to meeting those goals than we were when we first started? This article focuses on the first goal, to end poverty, as it affects the lives of women and children in Canada. To date Canada still has not yet developed a national strategy to end poverty. Because women are most affected by poverty, by promoting gender equality and supporting women's fight for their rights, we are working towards achieving our mandate to end poverty.

According to Statistics Canada and the 2001 Census, pre-tax low income cut-off poverty rates for families show the following figures:

- 6.6 per cent of double income families with children live in poverty
- 22.2 per cent of single male parent families live in poverty
- 47.1 per cent of single female parent families live in poverty
- 11.6 per cent of children in a two parent family live in poverty
- 52.1 per cent of children in single female parent families live in poverty.

Based on the above figures, it is evident that women and their children are most affected by poverty. Consequently, ending poverty will directly improve the lives of women.

In the report Solving Poverty, Four cornerstones of a workable national strategy for Canada, the National Council

of Welfare (NCW) notes that in general, Canada is out of step with important developments in preventing and reducing poverty. It suggests the need to focus on: 1) creating a national anti-poverty strategy with targets and timelines; 2) developing a coordinated plan of action; 3) ensuring accountability; and 4) establishing official poverty indicators.

The report also names four social programs and services that can contribute to the well-being and security of individuals and families: minimum wage laws; social housing and rent supports and subsidies; health care support and subsidies (e.g. special dietary needs, disability aids, dental care, prescription drugs); and childcare spaces, supports and subsidies.

At Nellie's, we recently completed our next Strategic Plan for 2007-2009. It identifies among its four strategic directions a furtherance of our role in advocacy and social justice for women, children and youth and to provide innovative and responsive programs and services for women, children and youth. In the next three years we will continue to work in partnership with organizations and associations that have a mandate to address the root causes of poverty and inequality. We will advocate for the implementation of the Four Steps to end poverty and at the same time, will continue to provide individual support to address issues of health, housing, employment, childcare and training and how they affect women and children.

The NCW report validates the work that Nellie's does in advocacy (Campaign 2000 to end child poverty, housing, minimum wage, increased social assistance campaigns), and programs geared to the most disadvantaged.

Nellie's Strategic Plan 2007-2009

Nellie's Strategic Plan has identified four directions in which we should concentrate our efforts:

1) Violence against women, children and youth must not be accepted as inevitable by our society. We need to fight to change social, economic and political conditions so that violence is eradicated. But until that time comes, women need to be able to access the means to protect themselves and their children from violence in their lives.

2) Social justice: Nellie's positions on social justice issues are informed by the experiences of the women, children and youth we work with and through the organization's broader participation in the community. The development of policy in the areas of poverty, violence, homelessness and oppression has enabled the organization to speak on and participate in broader social justice work at the municipal, provincial and federal level. The strategies, in particular, recognize and include community partnership, coalition building, education, service responses and cross-sectional approaches to achieving economic and political equality for all women, children and youth.

3) Women and homelessness: All women, children and youth have the right to safe, affordable, permanent housing. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights affirms the basic and fundamental right to have housing that provides protection from the

elements; allows access to safe water and sanitation; is accompanied by secure tenancy; protects personal safety; is within easy reach of employment, education and health care; and does not cost more than is required to fulfill other basic needs such as food. Women's homelessness is a result of social, political, economic and gender inequality. Women who are survivors of domestic violence are at an increased risk for homelessness.

4) Poverty: This is a form of violence against women and their children, and can and should be eradicated. All women, children and youth have the right to adequate resources to meet their basic needs, both material, like food, clothing and shelter; and their basic need for security, independence and self realization to achieve their goals. Women, children and youth have the right to be free from fear, hunger, homelessness, and vulnerability to abuse or mistreatment.

Nellie's pledges to: strengthen and increase our organizational capacity; stabilize and pursue additional sources of funding; further our role in advocacy and social justice for women, children and youth; and provide innovative and responsive programs and services for women, children and youth based on Nellie's positions.



Beth Jordan and Dionne Falconer facilitating Nellie's Strategic Planning session for 2007-2009

With these strategic directions, Nellie's will honour our commitment to our organizational values with an approach of integrated feminism, anti-racism and anti-oppression. We will respond with programs and services that meet the needs of the diversity of women and children who have experienced abuse, poverty, homelessness, and violence. These programs and services will address the needs of children and youth, and will have a positive impact on their health and well being, allowing them to grow and prosper. The goal of our programs and services is to strengthen the economic and social position of women, enabling them to protect and support themselves and their children.

Shelter Update *By Abide Sherazee, Counsellor*



Judy Yong & Stephanie Matheson from the Bank of Montreal speaking to the women on financial management

Through the fall and into winter, the winter programming at the shelter centered on indoor activities. In October, we celebrated Eid-ul-Fitr which is a Muslim religious holiday marking the end of Ramadan's fasting. We had a traditional Eid dinner party, with Indian, Pakistani and African foods, which the women and children enjoyed. Halloween was also celebrated with an indoor party where everyone sampled treats like cakes, sweets, candies, chocolates and chips.

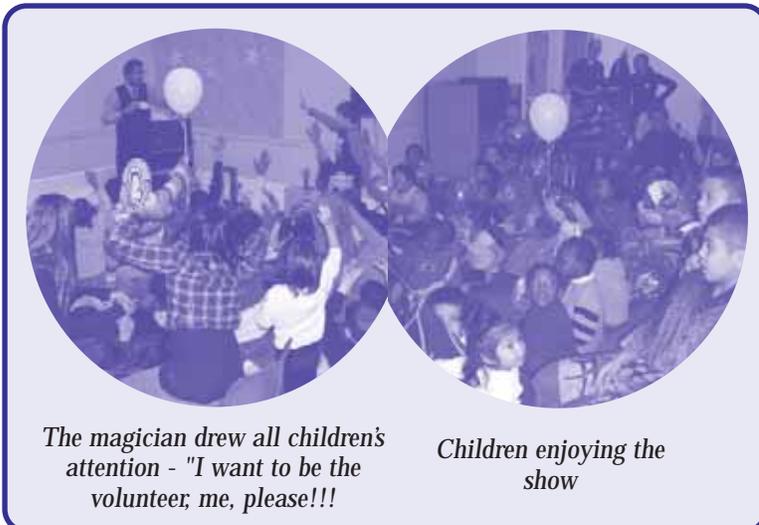
In November, the women and children were taken to a traditional Middle Eastern Music and Dance show at the Premier Dance Theatre at Queens Quay West. They got to experience music and dance styles from Egypt to Arabia. The women and children were presented with different styles of dancing from belly-dancing to Sufi Whirling. It was a lovely experience that we all thoroughly enjoyed.

*December's programming started with women and children participating in a candlelight vigil, "Women Won't Forget," to commemorate the tragedy of December 6 1989, when 14 women engineering students were deliberately targeted by a killer. The women were also taken to see a documentary titled *The Heart Has Its Own Memory*, a film about the injustices experienced by the Native women in Canada. Also in December, women and children participated in a tree-trimming event. During Christmas time women and children were taken to a festive lunch at a restaurant. The restaurateur gave all the children who attended a gift. Christmas was celebrated on the 20th of December by having a traditional dinner. After the Christmas dinner the women and children opened their gifts and there was a lot of singing, and dancing as well!*



Thank you to everyone for making holiday gifts possible!

Upcoming events from January to March will include crochet lessons, along with different workshops and cooking lessons. In February we celebrate Black History Month with programming to honour the contributions of African Canadians.



The magician drew all children's attention - "I want to be the volunteer, me, please!!!"

Children enjoying the show



Arts & Crafts table at the holiday party

CSO Update - By Natasha Brien, Student Placement

The CSO team has worked very hard throughout the fall and into the new year, organizing a variety of fantastic events at Nellies Community Support and Outreach. Thank you to all of the staff, students, volunteers and presenters who gave of their time and effort to make all of the events a success!



Winter Bowling

The month of October began with Strategic Planning on Oct. 12, 2006. Nellie's implemented our anti-racist/anti-oppression framework by ensuring the women of the Her Share Program had the opportunity to actively participate in this process. Women offered fantastic ideas, feedback and constructive criticism which proved to be an essential component to ensuring an inclusive, complete process.

On Oct. 26, Irene Au-Yeung and Joelle Therriault from the Toronto District School Board came and spoke to participants regarding the cultural differences and difficulties that newcomers face. On Dec. 7, Judy Yong and Stephanie Matheson from the Bank of Montreal joined us to speak about financial management, banking, saving and to answer any questions the women had.



*Holiday party food
-YUM!*

Holiday celebrations started with Eid and Diwali in October, and continued through December with Hanukkah and Christmas. Thank you to Gail Prosser and Siobhan Dempsey for helping organize and coordinate holiday wishes for the children over the holiday season! A special thank you goes to the George Brown students for helping us with our Winter Wonderland Holiday party on Dec. 7.

We look forward to a new and exciting year in 2007, and plan to have more speakers come in and discuss a variety of topics, including celebrating cultural events, self care and much more!



*Asia Rabba & Jodi
Pronchuk from
Sugarbabies pamper our
women with mini-
manicures and gifts*



*Charmaine Adams pampering
the women with a relaxing
massage*



*Children with new school
supplies for Back to School*



*Joelle Therriault from the
Toronto District School
Board speaking to our
women*

Special thanks to our Friends

The following is a list of our recent major donors. A special thanks to our major donors who prefer to remain anonymous.

A. Beal & J. Hoare
A. Guillen
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International Women's Association of Toronto



Thank you from Margarita to Siobhan Dempsey for her coordination of gifts for our children



Thank you Gail for your amazing holiday gifts for our kids possible!



Margarita expressed our thanks to the amazing team of George Brown Students who helped with our Winter Wonderland party



Thank you to LCBO Summerhill for their continued support of our women's programs

J. Blazina
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The Derick Brenninkmeyer Charitable Fdn
The Manchec Foundation
The Ontario Trillium Foundation
The Toskan Foundation
The United Way of Greater Toronto
Toronto Fire Fighters
United Food & Commercial Workers
WSIB, Staff Association Charity Trust

"Awakenings 2007"

**Friday, March 9 at St Lawrence Hall,
157 King Street East: 9 pm to 2 am**

Bring your friends to celebrate International Women's Day with Nellie's and the Assaulted Women's Helpline at our Awakenings Dance! Come enjoy non-stop music from our fabulous women DJs Verlia, Jola and Vashti and special guest go-go dancer Coco LaCreme. Tickets available at the Toronto Women's Bookstore or Nellie's and the Assaulted Women's Helpline. Doors open at 9:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10 advance, \$12 at the door. This is a licensed event, so admission is restricted to 19 years of age or over.

Daisy of Hope Campaign

May 2007

In time for Mother's Day, May is Daisy of Hope Month. The Daisy of Hope Campaign is a province-wide fundraising campaign to help women's shelters raise awareness of violence against women and children. Join us to buy and/or sell daisy lapel pins for a toonie. Funds will go to support Nellie's programs. Drop by Broadview, Eglinton or Yonge/Bloor subway stations during the morning and afternoon rush hours on May 2, 3 and 4 to buy a pin. If you would like to sell or buy daisies at work/school, please call Wendy at 416-461-0769. Help spread the word!

Jazz It Up with Nellie's



**Thurs. May 24th, 2007
Harbourfront Centre,
Brigantine Theatre Room:
7 pm**

Back by popular demand, this year's Jazz It Up will feature the legendary Jackie Richardson in a rare and intimate performance for Nellie's. With spectacular performances, delectable hors'dourves, and a sumptuous chocolate buffet, it promises to be a great night out. There will be a cash bar, and tickets are \$60, available at the Harbourfront Centre Box Office. Call 416-973-4000.

For more information on any of our events, call Wendy at 416-461-0769

Join us at these events!

Great Art Glad Heart 2006



Thanks to all the art lovers who came out to support Nellie's Great Art Glad Heart Art Exhibit and Auction at the Gladstone Hotel on Nov. 22.

*Board member Marcia Beck
says a few words at Auction*

*Right: Bidders proudly guarding their bids.
Below: At the Gladstone Hotel, patrons
view the exceptional submissions at 4th -
Annual Great Heart Glad Heart Auction*



A special thanks to the 49 participating artists:

Rona Allen, Alex Anagnostou, Heidi Barkun, Helen Brier, Janna Cheng, Cecilia Cho, Ethel Christensen, Rita Daniel, Susan Dimitrakopoulos, Jillian Ditner, Julie Dix, Brooke Friendly, Michelle Goldfinger, Glenda Heathcote, Julie Himel, Hilda Hinojosa, David Hu, David Hunter, Drew Khan, Anna Kiss, Gellien Lai, Eva Lewarne, Ching Lou, Eddie Lui, Rebecca McCarthy, Sally McCubbin, Bao-Qing Meng, Dinah Napoto, Claudette Nevins, Jane Or Novotny, Suzanne Oommen, Joe Paczuski, Sasha Pierce, Michele Spring Rhachi, Terri Robertson, Dave Sheppard, Ann Shier, David Swartz, Judy Thorley, Chiho Tokita, Jayne Sims, Sherece Taffe, Margie Wagner, Laura Watt, Steve Wilson, Keng-Hing Wong, Nam Wong-Lin, Jiin Yiong.



Way to go Art Auction team

Joy is magic



**Thank you for
making this holiday season
so wonderful for the women and
kids at Nellie's! You are the reason
why these smiles are possible!!**



Nellie's Calendar of Events

March	National Women's History Month
Mar 8	International Women's Day Theme: "Ending Impunity for Violence Against Women & Girls"
Mar 9	Awakenings 2007 – Nellie's Annual Fundraising Women's Dance
Mar 21	International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination – UN
Apr 7	World Health Day – UN
May	Daisy of Hope Campaign
May 2, 3, 4	Daisy of Hope Subway Campaign
May 13	Mother's Day
May 15	International Day of Families – UN
May 23	African Liberation Day
May 24	Jazz it up with Nellie's– Our Annual Signature Fundraiser
Jun 20	World Refugee Day
Jun 21	National Aboriginal Day
Jun 23-24	Pride Weekend

Note: Please visit our website at www.nellies.org for all community and cultural celebrations for 2007

Nellie's Contact Information

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In Kind Donations: 416-461-0521
Charitable No.: 11930-2727-RR0001
Thank you to Nellie's volunteer Editor, Julie Allin, for her help.

