



From the Executive Director

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Sonshine Community Services! We have much to be grateful for here at Sonshine, as we celebrate 35 years of witnessing women and children's lives transformed as their basic human rights to safety, dignity, shelter and wellbeing are restored to them.

Over the summer months construction began on Sonshine Children's Centre. Although we are not quite there, we are three quarters on our way to reaching our campaign goal of one million dollars. We've also been busy preparing for Hope Gala, our annual fundraising dinner, taking place on October 25. The night's keynote speaker will be none other than human rights activist, journalist and award-winning author Sally Armstrong. Details on securing your ticket are inside this newsletter.



I would be remiss to not mention the effect the June flood had on our clients and the greater community. We are incredibly thankful that Sonshine Centre was not in the flood zone. This allowed us to be on hand during the entire emergency to support other women's shelters needing to evacuate their facilities, and help flood victims find alternative living arrangements.

We are experiencing repercussions from the flood devastation though. Research from regions in similar circumstances shows how emergency situations often result in escalated and more frequent domestic violence incidents, which increases the demand on service agencies like Sonshine. Meanwhile, we have seen a significant decrease in funding for the past three months, as individuals and organizations redirect their giving towards flood relief.

I am thankful to be part of such an optimistic, generous city, and I applaud all the efforts of Calgarians who have pulled together and supported friends, family and even strangers devastated by the flooding. Your continued support of Sonshine Community Services helps mitigate the long-term effects the flood will have on families and children. Please consider donating to Sonshine's work as part of your Thanksgiving celebrations this year.

Thank you!

Dr. Joy Johnson-Green
Executive Director, Sonshine Community Services

We are going electronic! Sign up for our e-newsletter

We appreciate trees. We also want to put our limited dollars to the best possible use. So we are reducing the frequency of printed newsletters and switching to an electronic format for regular updates. You can sign up at www.sonshine.ab.ca, or e-mail kmeyers@sonshine.ab.ca and ask to be added to the list.

Our counsellors asked residents at Sonshine: “What are you most thankful for?” Here is what they had to say:

“I am most grateful for safety and having a place to feel safe. I feel joy when I know I can feel safe and get help. I receive both of these at Sonshine. I am looking forward to a new life with a job. I would like to move on from what happened in the past.” - Current resident

“When I get to come here and be with my mom. My skateboard. My big brother - I miss him. When I come here (to Sonshine) and see you and I get to play. I'll be super grateful when I can move here.”
- 9 year old boy

“My mom, my sister, all my family and for all my friends. That you give me your help and listen to me when I have a problem that makes me feel like I have a fever inside my body. That I get to have my own time with you.”
- 9 year old boy

“That we have a van now, my family, school, my best friend, and coming to spend time with you when it's just me and not with my sisters.” - 7 year old girl

“I am thankful for my counsellor for helping me a lot. I am also thankful for the volunteer coordinator (and) for other people that work here (at Sonshine). I am looking forward to finding a job once my English improves, (and) finding a safe house for me to move to. (I am happy because) I am able to go out and make new friends at a church. Sonshine is giving me things that help me in life.”
- Current resident

“My family, God and Lays plain chips!”
- 11 year old girl

“Playing in the sand with you and me.”
- 5 year old girl

“My toys and princess dress!”
- 4 year old girl

Sonshine Children's Centre Update

We are excited that the construction of Sonshine Children's Centre is set for completion by the end of this year! By the spring of 2014, about 30 young children will be given a place to play, grow and heal from trauma on a daily basis with the support of loving, trained staff and volunteers. Plus custom-built furnishings, colourful paint, bright décor, and a variety of educational resources and toys will help children feel welcomed and engaged.

You still have the opportunity to contribute to the Firm Foundations Capital Campaign, as we continue to raise funds for interior spacing, equipment and toys, and programming.

You're invited to the Hope Gala

Please join us at our annual fundraising auction and dinner on October 25 at 6:00 p.m. This year we are thrilled to feature **Sally Armstrong**, author of the *Ascent of Women*, as our guest speaker. Human rights activist, journalist and award-winning author, Sally has covered stories about women and girls in zones of conflict all over the world. From Bosnia and Somalia to the Middle East, Rwanda, Congo and Afghanistan, her eye witness reports have earned her awards including the Gold Award from the National Magazine Awards Foundation and the Author's Award from the Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Letters. She received the Amnesty International Media Award in 2000, 2002 and 2011.

Our Master of Ceremonies will be none other than **Darrel Janz** of CTV, one of Calgary's most beloved news anchors.

The Hope Gala will take place at Gasoline Alley at Heritage Park. Tickets are \$150, and can be purchased in advance at www.sonshinehopegala.com or by calling 403.705.3485. Tax receipts will be issued for a portion of the ticket price.

We're absolutely positive you'll feel uplifted and inspired!

Why do you choose to give to Sonshine?

"Investors Group is committed to supporting our community. Sonshine Community Services is a relevant and unfortunately greatly needed facility in Calgary. The quality of support provided from the dedicated staff as well as the volunteers is inspiring, which is why Investors Group is proud to make this one of our charities of choice." – *Rob Bisson, Regional Director, Investors Group Financial Services Inc.*

"ASCCI is proud to support Sonshine Community Services, who is on the front line of helping the thousands of women and children who seek shelter and continued support from abuse, a tragic reality in our city and province. When we can contribute by providing building security, Sonshine can provide a safe environment for clients and staff, which is key in the commitment to breaking the cycle of domestic violence." – *Nikita Scinger, All Systems Contracting Calgary Inc.*

At Sonshine, we are grateful to our family of supporters who come through for the women and children in our care time and time again. This includes Southview Alliance Church, Canadian Women's Foundation, Coleston Marketing Ltd, River Park Christian Reformed Church, Westside King's Church and Cenovus Energy. These organizations and others, along with our faithful friends who donate monthly, helped sustain our work through the summer months, when our resources as a result of the June flood had to stretch even farther. Please consider donating today. Thank you!

I commit to One time donation of _____ Monthly donation of _____

Please use my donation for:

Sonshine Centre Sonshine Children's Centre Benevolent Counseling Where most needed

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ PC: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Credit Card Number _____ EXP Date: _____



Please return this form by email, fax, or mail to: PO Box 34067 RPO Westbrook, Calgary, AB T3C 1T3
Phone: 403.705.3485 Fax: 403.287.2194 Email: jpyle@sonshine.ab.ca Donate online at www.sonshine.ab.ca

Sonshine Volunteers...who are they and what do they do?

They are: The small but significant group from SunWest Christian Fellowship who helped a resident who had just graduated from Sonshine clean and paint her new home. The strong and organized team from Southview Alliance who helped a mom her two children move out of Sonshine and helped her replace many items that she lost from her storage locker in High River. Brenda Clairo, a graphic artist, who led an art workshop with the ladies in our life skills group. Caralee Savage from Legacy One, who gave a dance demonstration and then taught some happening hip hop moves. They are the employees and family members from CH2MHill who constructed Sonshine Centre's new patio this spring. It's Irene and Harry, Sonshine volunteers for 32 years and counting, who every Tuesday carry in food they have picked up from the food bank and bring to Sonshine. And we could go on, but there just isn't space to tell you about the other 200 plus volunteers who brighten up the lives of our residents and staff.

We are thankful for each and every one of our volunteers!

It would be my pleasure to let you know how you could be a part of this dedicated and inspiring team. With the holidays just around the corner, we'll also be launching our annual Adopt a Family Program, giving you the opportunity to bless a family whose budgets are stretched thin. Call me to learn more!

Terry-Mae Hepburn, Volunteer Coordinator
403 243 0274

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