



**Chebucto
Family Centre**

A Service of the Home of the Guardian Angel

since 1887



Annual General Report

April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014

**The Home of the Guardian Angel
President's Report
2013-2014**

The Home of the Guardian Angel (HGA) continues to deliver high quality programs and services to the community. With cooperation from Board and Staff members we have been able to fulfill our mission.

Over this past year, we have come together to stage two successful fundraisers, "Birth, the Play", and "Comedy for Community." Our goal is to host these types of events annually to serve as signature fundraisers for HGA.

The Board remains committed to HGA's Strategic Plan. A successful meeting of Board and Staff occurred in May. These meetings have allowed us to stay on task, as we strive to meet the Strategic Plan guidelines set in 2012.

Board members convened in February to host a Spry Café evening. The meal was enjoyed by 40 parents and children at the Centre. The Board has committed to serving as Spry Café hosts annually.

Thanks to our Nomination Committee, we have been able to maintain our full complement of Board members. This year we said good bye to Rob Southwell, who served on the Board for 2 years. He continues to assist HGA as administrator of our website. We also said farewell to Michelle Lawrence, who served as Treasurer for 2 years. Liz Grabher, after serving for 1 year as Personnel Committee Chair, has resigned. We thank these folks for sharing their time and talent with HGA. We are very pleased to welcome Lucas Rowicki, Coleen Logan, Alyson Hillier, Pat LeFebvre, Jim Evans, Erin Bleasedale, Rena Macguire, and Marc Harpell.

In closing, I would like to thank a number of people. We are grateful to our Executive Director, Tammy Turple, for her capable leadership. I would like to express my appreciation to my colleagues on the Board of Directors for their tireless enthusiasm and commitment. And I would like to thank staff at HGA for their dedication and passion to making the lives of families better. It has been my pleasure to serve as Board President for the past two years. The future of the Home of the Guardian Angel is bright, as it strives to meet the needs of the community.

Respectfully submitted
Karen Burke
President, Board of Directors, Home of the Guardian Angel

Executive Director's Report

In writing my report, I am reflective of the past year, and excited by the potential of the upcoming year ahead. The Home of the Guardian Angel continues to make a positive impact on the families, children and community members that we support, through our community based programs and services.

During the year we saw changes in our staff, both temporary and permanent. This was due to maternity leave, and other opportunities of growth in the Centre.

This past year we received our license and funding for the Family Home Daycare Agency and are currently supporting 2 homes in the Community. The Parenting Program saw the creation of WOW-E, an interactive parent child program that supports emotional wellness.

Although our Centre has a strong foundation of programs and funding, we again faced the challenge of securing sustainable funding for the Volunteer Doula Program. This past year we worked tirelessly to pursue different funding avenues, to no avail. We are currently exploring a funding possibility with the Department of Health and Wellness, and are awaiting a decision.

We remain involved with the Multi Service Round Table, The Echo Hub and the Spryfield Family Task Force. New this year, was the invitation to sit and participate on the Rockingstone Early Years Centre Hub Committee. This is yet another opportunity to collaborate with community partners and strengthen our work.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, board and volunteers who work in the pursuit of excellence in our services. We are grateful to our funders, the Department of Community Services, United Way of Halifax, Health Canada, IWK and Capital District Health Authority for their continued support. We also want to give thanks to our many benefactors for supporting our programs and services this past year.

It is with the combined effort of staff, board, volunteers, community partners and our funders that make the Centre the success that it is.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Turple
Executive Director

By-laws and Nominating Committee 2013-2014

Additions to By-laws

The Canada Revenue Agency audit conducted in the fall of 2013 identified omissions in the By-laws, namely, the absence of clauses pertaining to dissolution and 'no benefits to members'. Such clauses are mandatory for registered charities in Canada. At the January 2014 meeting, having been given due notice, the Board approved the addition of these two clauses:

No Benefits to Members

No part of the income of the Society shall be payable to or otherwise available for the personal benefit of any director of the Society, and the Society shall not be operated for the pecuniary profit of any of its directors. Nothing herein shall derogate from the powers of the Board of Directors to grant remuneration to those staff and members engaged for the purpose of the Society pursuant to these By-laws.

Dissolution

If for any reason the operations of the Society are terminated or are wound up, or are dissolved and there remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, this shall be paid to some other charitable organization in Canada, having objects similar to those of the Society.

Updating of By-laws

The committee reviewed the existing copy of by-laws to assure that revisions were made to incorporate the several by-law changes made in the last three years, and to make some needed editing changes. We could not locate an electronic version of the by-laws, so we are in the process of preparing a new one. This editing process will be ongoing in the coming year.

Board Membership

There were some departures from the board in 2013-2014, but we were fortunate to have more new arrivals than departures. At the time of this writing, we have the full number of board members mandated by our by-laws.

We are thankful for the generous contributions of Robert Southwell, Elizabeth Grabher and Michelle Lawrence, Treasurer, who left the Board this past year.

We welcomed Lucas Rowicki as Treasurer, Alyson Hillier, Coleen Logan, Erin Bleasdale, Marc Harpell and Rena Maguire as Board appointees, and Jim Evans and Pat Lefebvre as Sisters of Charity appointees. We are thankful for their expertise, talents and willingness to serve.

Submitted by: Lorraine d'Entremont, SC

For the By-laws and Nominating Committee:

Alyson Hillier, Karen Burke, Lorraine d'Entremont and Tammy Purple, Ex-officio.

Finance Committee Report

As per the unaudited financial statements, the Home of the Guardian Angel (HGA) came in above budget this past 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Due to the strong financial performance of HGA this past year, the \$20,000 that was withdrawn the previous fiscal year from the Savings Account to cover operational/payroll expenses has been repaid in full May 2014.

Annual revenue came in over budget by \$75K. This is due to an increase in new grant money driven by The Province of Nova Scotia (Home Daycare) and Other Grants. Special thanks to the Executive Director and staff of the HGA who diligently pursued all available options for funding.

Annual expenses came in over budget by \$39K. This was primarily driven by higher Salaries & Wages due to the new hire for the Family Home Daycare, Supplies, Repairs & Maintenance, and Advertising & Promotion.

At the end of the year, HGA had a surplus of \$33K (\$26K more than budgeted), certainly highlighting a very successful year. With additional secured funding for the upcoming year, HGA is in a strong position to continue its growth with community programs and support.

The 2014-15 budget has been completed and approved by the Board of Directors.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucas Rowicki, MBA, CMA
Chair, Finance Committee

Fundraising Committee Report 2013 - 2014

Committee Members:

Jim Evans (chair)
Pat Lefebvre
Coleen Logan
Eileen Pelham
Tammy Turple (ex officio)

In June of 2013 the Fundraising Committee of 2012-13 hosted the international hit play “Birth”, at the Bella Rose Theatre, Halifax. The play was written by Karen Brody, directed by Ann-Marie Kerr and performed by real –life Doulas. Profits from this fundraising event were approximately \$9,800.

In the fall of 2014 a new Fundraising Committee was formed and based on the success of last years’ fundraising event, it was decided that the upcoming fundraiser for 2013-14 would be held at the Bella Rose Theatre once again. Through a family contact at the Centre, we were able to secure world touring L.A comedians, James Uloth and Lamont Ferguson for an evening of standup comedy, stories and laughter (Comedy for Community). In conjunction to this, there was also an auction and a wine/cheese reception. Profits from this event were approximately \$10,000.

With the establishment of a successful “Annual Fundraising Event” and in keeping in pace with the Strategic Plan of 2012-15, the next step for our committee is to evaluate the establishment of a foundation or endowment for HGA. Plans are in place to bring to the Centre, a speaker from another nonprofit organization. We look forward to the challenges ahead of bringing long term financing to HGA.

Respectfully submitted,
Committee chair
Jim Evans

Personnel and Management Committee
Report for AGM, June 2014

The Committee met on three occasions this year. Committee members are Carol Fardy, Karen Burke, Tammy Turple and Dale Darling.

Our focus on the Committee was to conduct a full review of the personnel policies for the Chebucto Family Centre, with a view to updating the policies and bringing them into line with Labour Standards as required.

This work is now almost complete, and highlights of the revised draft will be presented to the Board in the Fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Darling, Chair

Prenatal/Postnatal Support Programs

The Prenatal/Postnatal Support Program continues to offer individual support, telephone support, advocacy, home visits, and a variety of programs to prenatal/postnatal participants. Some of the programs that were once again more popular and well attended were prenatal classes, Rock and Rhyme, and infant massage.

The demand for prenatal classes is on the rise, perhaps due to the increased number of participants being recruited from the prenatal clinics at Dalhousie Family Medicine, as well as the decreased number of classes offered otherwise in the community. Additionally, more and more participants are seeking classes that are broader in content, and that cover from pregnancy to early parenting and the postnatal period. The program continues to be facilitated by both the prenatal educator and the a Community Home visitor, which proves to be a great way to spread knowledge and strengthen relationships between participants and home visitors.

The collaboration between the Prenatal Program and Dalhousie Family Medicine at both the Spryfield and Mumford Locations is proving to be an invaluable partnering, for both the clinic and the centre. The prenatal educator attends the prenatal clinics once per week, and is available to answer any questions regarding the prenatal or postnatal period, including breastfeeding support. Currently, approximately one third to one half of prenatal class attendees have been recruited from the clinics, and are often people who would likely not have connected with the centre otherwise. Similarly, the clinics have reported that the partnership has decreased the amount of time that physicians spend on non-clinical questions during prenatal appointments. An additional benefit is that prenatal participants have been continuing on to access postnatal services at the centre. It's a win-win!

One area that we are striving to improve in is our breastfeeding support clinic on Tuesday mornings, as attendance has been very low. Participants continue to access support through the centre, primarily on an individual basis and through in home support. In the coming year, we would like to see more participants coming for the drop in, as there are so many benefits to having participants come together as a group.

Overall, this year has been a busy and exciting time for the prenatal program, with lots of participants, and lots of beautiful little babies. It's always nice to come together as a staff for larger events and programs, such as Spry Café, Family Fun day, and our Annual fundraiser.

We look forward to another fantastic year, and to continuing to build partnerships with other community providers to enhance the over- all support that we are able to offer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trena Slaunwhite Gallant

I wanted to convey my heartfelt thanks to the wonderful team at the Home of the Guardian Angel. Being just over a year old in Canada and adjusting to a new culture, climate and finding a job were challenging as it is, when we found out that there was a baby on the way –something that we weren’t ready for. My pregnancy didn’t turn out to be the best with severe physical and mental stress; when a colleague at work told me about the Doula service at the Home of the Guardian Angel. I was elated to know that the service was free for newcomers to Canada as it wouldn’t have been feasible for me to pay for a Doula; although I badly needed one – this being my first pregnancy and the fact that I had no family in Canada and no one from India was able to come. Right from my first interaction with Erin, then Jesse and my Doula Katharine (Katie) and backup Doula Crystal and last but in no way the least Trena, I was made to feel special and cared for. My questions were answered and my voice was heard and they made every effort to make sure that I was able to visualize and be prepared for the upcoming birth. In my mind, everything looked perfect – my weight was just right, baby was head down; I did not want any interventions and had opted for a natural birth. I knew I was going to breastfeed (and shopped high and low for a host of nursing clothes). Everything came crashing down when my water leaked and labor had to be induced. Katie was there even before I had started contracting and stood there like a rock comforting me physically and mentally. After laboring for 12 hours without any intervention I found out that the dilation was only 2 cms. I requested for Epidural. Katie was non-judgmental and encouraged me to do what I thought and felt was right. After 6 more hours of intense labour when even my husband could not stay awake, Katie persevered, comforting me and never leaving my side. When finally the doctor suggested that I go for a caesarean section and I was scared to death; Katie held my hand and stayed by my side during the surgery and after that till 11 am the next day. For her it had been almost 30 hours without sleep. Our son was born at 1:44 am, Jan 1st – the first baby of the New Year in HRM. For some time we were euphoric. However, the euphoria passed soon enough when he would not breastfeed despite a host of nurses at the IWK, the lactation consultant and the doctor’s effort. I was devastated. The baby was home, I was in immense pain from the surgery and the epidural’s side effects were kicking in with severe pain in my spine. I could barely move and here was a baby who cried incessantly, did not breastfeed and was awake all the time. I did not know if I could make it through the next hour, forget the day. Katie referred me to Trena and I believe that a BIG part of the fact that I am sane and bonding with my baby goes to this wonderful superwoman. Trena jumped in with all her might and took stock of the situation. She made a plan for me where she mobilized the resources available at the Centre to support me for breastfeeding as well providing emotional support. She herself made time multiple times a week despite her busy schedule; provided me with a double breast pump, a Medella Calma nipple, told me about other mom and baby groups around my area and numerous tips on how to make breastfeeding work. Where I had been feeling that I was the only mother who was not able to breastfeed, she told me that there were others too who had undergone the same situation. Jesse also stepped in to help make breastfeeding work and I put all my efforts so that my son would get some breast milk. Despite everyone’s best efforts, ultimately my son did not latch on and as far as I can remember this was the most depressing time in my life. It was the coldest winter I had ever witnessed, my husband worked 12 hour days and there was a raging guilt that I had let my baby down by not being able to breastfeed. My depression returned with a vengeance and nothing could make me feel better. I decided that I would switch to formula feeding my son and the first person that I informed after my husband was Trena. What came as a turning point in my life was Trena’s reaction. Till I had that discussion with her, numerous people had passed snide remarks, been judgmental and told me how I was not doing justice to my son. Even my family back in India failed to understand my predicament. I would have probably ended up with a psychiatrist had Trena not supported my decision by saying that she knew that I had tried my best and done whatever I could to nourish my baby. Her support gave me the strength to go through with my decision and slowly I saw my relationship with my son change. I was able to concentrate more on both of our well-being and the pent up frustration slowly started melting away. At this point my public health nurse had referred me to the Healthy Beginning program and I was introduced to Nicole; another angel in my life. Nicole’s warmth, compassion and patience helped me to build myself back to the old me; when I felt low or guilty she told

me that there were others like me and that I should concentrate on bonding with my child because children need more than they need nourishment. As I write these lines, my eyes are brimming with tears. I am unsure if I have done enough justice to these wonderful women who have touched my life and put it back together when I was at my loneliest and most desolate state. My family is extremely grateful to the Home of the Guardian Angel and the Government of Nova Scotia for having such wonderful programs. I doubt if my family would have done anything more than what my Doulas and Nicole did for me. There could not be better people than these women who do their work so much passion and have such love and compassion for a mother. Thank you once again.

Mallika Pathy

June 2, 2014

AGM Report 2014: Volunteer Doula Program (VDP)

The VDP has seen some change this year as Jessie Harrold, a doula with the VDP for 6 years, is currently acting as Erin Fair's replacement while she is away on maternity leave. Jessie will be in the position until Erin's return in November, 2014.

Program Outcomes

The VDP supported 130 women in the 2013/2014 fiscal year. This number is up from 120 in 2012/2013, showing a steady increase in awareness and usage of the program, particularly after the initial decline when the eligibility criteria were enacted in 2012.

Program outcomes continue to be very positive. This year, nearly 40% of the program's clients were newcomers to Canada. A full 29% of our clients birthed without medication, and our breastfeeding rates remain high.

New Initiatives

There are a number of new initiatives being undertaken this year within the Program.

- The VDP will undergo a complete, formal evaluation in 2014. Jessie has convened an Evaluation Working Group consisting of Doula Steering Committee Members and doulas to guide the work of the evaluation. The group will be validating a logic model developed with the assistance of Public Health several years ago, and then creating an Evaluation Framework which outlines what data are needed to inform the logic model, what information we already collect, and what indicators we are missing data for. The evaluation will then proceed into the data collection phase, whereby missing data will be sought from doulas, clients of the program, partners and the Coordinator. The evaluation will be completed in November 2014, culminating in a final report and recommendations, along with new and revised tools for the ongoing collection of program data.
- The VDP welcomed two student nurses from Dalhousie University in the 2013/2014 school year. The nurses worked on a teen outreach project, in recognition of the fact that though the VDP aims to support teen moms as a priority population, few teen mothers access the program. Jessie and the nurses began with a youth engagement session at J.L. Ilsley school to find out how youth wanted to learn about the VDP, and what the most effective outreach methods would be. They responded that an improved web presence, posters, and business cards, including a scannable QR code for easy web access, would be helpful. As a result, we embarked on the creation of posters and business cards as promotional materials, and also made a significant overhaul to the VDP website. Jessie has noticed a remarkable difference in the awareness of those accessing the program of the program's structure and eligibility criteria as a result of clients visiting the website to get more information about the program before calling. This has increased productivity for Jessie considerably. Jessie and the students began the outreach effort, providing poster and business cards to J.L. Ilsley and Halifax West schools for distribution. Jessie will continue these efforts when school goes back in session in the Fall.

- Along with the Perinatal Care for Women in Corrections Committee, Jessie has been working to offer doula services and provide referral linkages to women incarcerated at the Burnside Correctional Institute. The Committee developed a proposal that was sent to Burnside offering to provide services within the institution. Jessie, Tammy and Martha Paynter, one of the volunteer doulas, met with staff at Burnside to explore the potential partnership. In the spring, we will be visiting the facility for a tour and a conversation with other staff there. We hope that this will pave the way for volunteer doulas to provide prenatal, birth and postnatal support within the prison.
- Jessie has been making an effort to decrease the extent to which the VDP relies on paper and manual methods of tracking clients, evaluating processes, and recording the work of the doulas. She hopes to continue creating electronic databases and collating paper-based data on an ongoing basis throughout the remainder of her time with the program.
- The VDP now has thank-you cards that are provided to each doula with the paperwork package they receive when taking on a client. These cards are used to acknowledging any IWK health care provider that the doula particularly appreciated working with. This is a way to build and strengthen relationships between doulas and birth professionals at the IWK.

Training

In the Spring of 2013, we trained 18 doulas to become volunteers through the program. In the Spring of 2014 we trained an additional 14. This was the first year that Trena Slaunwhite-Gallant, the prenatal and postnatal educator at the CFC, was certified and able to train the group of new doulas. We are pleased to welcome a wonderful new group of women into the program.

The in-services held by the VDP this year were very informative, and well-attended. Sessions included presentations by Cynthia Mann (Birth Unit Nurse and Reproductive Care Program Nurse Consultant) on supporting breastfeeding and on birth trauma, by Glenda Carson (Clinical Nurse Specialist) on working with women who are harmfully involved with substance use, and by Kim MacLean (Social Worker at Reproductive Mental Health) on maintaining healthy personal/professional boundaries with the clients that we support.

This is the second year that doulas have been paying for the birth doula training, with the possibility of being reimbursed if they support 5 clients over the course of their first year with the program. This year, we reimbursed 4 of the 12 doulas who were trained in April 2013. Though this number is relatively low in terms of the activity level of our new doulas, it does represent funds now available to the VDP that may not have been available if those doulas were reimbursed.

Sustainable Funding

Sustainable funding for the VDP continues to be a challenge. In 2013/2014, Tammy and Jessie approached several potential funders, including the United Way, Department of Community Services, and the Shoppers Drug Mart Tree of Life fund. None of these requests resulted in funding for the Program.

In early 2014, Jessie and Tammy drafted a proposal to the Department of Health and Wellness requesting sustainable funding for the program. They had the opportunity to meet with the Special Advisor to the Minister of Health and Wellness, which was facilitated by the advocacy of Brendan McGuire, our local MLA. We created a strong case for the VDP's alignment with the Department of Health and Wellness' mandate, and we await word from the Department as to whether or not they will be able to assist us.

Connections and Networking

The Doula Steering Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis.

The VDP continues to work closely with the Nova Scotia Doula Association to ensure collaboration, communication, and continuity between the two doula organizations.

The VDP drafted a letter to Public Health proposing that we collaborate to develop a Partnership Agreement that formalizes our funding agreement with them. Public Health agreed to work together to do this, and we hope to have the Agreement drafted soon. The program already has a Partnership Agreement with the IWK.

Jessie continues to do outreach and collaborative work within the community, including sitting on the Maritime Mothers' Milk Bank Work Group, providing both on-call and in-house breastfeeding support for the Centre, and attending prenatal classes to talk about the Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie Harold

"My doula was so incredibly informative. She had all the answers to our questions and made herself available 24/7. I truly feel [my birth experience] was as positive as it was because [my doula] virtually read my mind through the whole process."

"My Doula gave me the support and confidence that I needed. [She] was my best friend and part of my family during the hard time I had at the hospital. I just love the Volunteer Doula Program! So helpful and important to our community"

Parenting Program Report 2013-14

The past year at the Chebucto Family Center has been a steady one for the Parenting Program. With our playroom finally fully functioning after many flooding issues, and a consistent compliment of program staff, we have been much less stretched and able to bring our focus back to delivering quality programming and services.

After the success of last years pilot program Women of Wonder and assessing community need, we decided to expand the program in a different but very relevant direction. Recognizing the need and desire for more emotional wellness information and awareness programming for parents and their young children, WOW-E: Wee Ones of Wonder-Evolving, was born. This innovative and interactive program allows parents an opportunity to further develop their own awareness and skills around emotional wellness and transfer these learning's to their preschoolers through hands on activities, enhanced awareness and a parent child interaction component. We have delivered one full session of the program (Five weeks, with two sessions a week) and have received very positive feedback from participants and the community. The WOW-E program was partially funded by the Chebucto Community Health Board and we are waiting on additional funding from a variety of sources.

The gap between available quality childcare and the need for it has been long recognized in this community as a huge barrier to family's ability to seek and maintain meaningful employment or pursue educational goals. As a remedy to this we have been working for quite some time on establishing the CFC as a Family Home Daycare Agency, allowing us to support local caregivers in offering licensed, flexible care, eligible for subsidy, in the Spryfield and greater community. After much ground work this dream has come to reality! In September 2013 we received final approval from the *Department of Education* and are steadily acquiring quality care providers and gaining community awareness as a Family Home Daycare Agency.

We continue to partner with a variety of organizations and community members in order to better meet the needs of families and the greater community. In efforts to enhance and expand our connections I have facilitated Infant Massage classes for SHYM (Supportive Housing for Young Mothers) and delivered a Stress Management/Wellness workshop at the Spryfield YWCA. The CFC continues to be a key organizer in some very successful community initiatives (e.g. Tote Tales, Book Bonanza, Parenting Fair, Tap the Tap).

I also continue to provide individual support, counselling, and advocacy to a wide variety of families. Parents come to me with diverse needs around areas such as: emotional support, discipline, child development, relationship issues, child protection involvement, family court, anger management, grief, and referrals to community resources. I do my best to meet the specific needs of the parents, while encouraging their self-sufficiency. I meet parents at the CFC, do home visits, telephone calls, attend court proceedings, accompany them to appointments, or a combination of the above depending on the needs of the family and my availability.

Respectfully submitted,
Kira Kelly

Enhanced Community Home Visitor Program 2013-2014

The Enhanced Community Home Visitor Program is a voluntary program offered to families with a child in the age range from birth to six months. Generally a family screens into the program while in hospital after having a new baby. Once a family has screened into the program through a Public Health Nurse, they are offered support by a Community Home Visitor until their child is three years of age. The Community Home Visitor is part of a multi-disciplinary team that focuses on supporting parents, promoting healthy parent-child relationships, fostering healthy child development and linking families with community resources that enhance opportunities for healthy growth and development of the child and the family as a whole.

The objectives of the Healthy Beginnings Enhanced Home Visiting Initiative are to:

- **promote the optimal level of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children;**
- **enhance the capacity of parents to support healthy child development and;**
- **contribute to the system of child development services and supports for children and their families.**

The Home Visiting Program at Chebucto Family Centre continues with the same two Community Home Visitors, Nicole Clarke and Theresa Banks-Rex, who have been in the Home Visiting role since the last reporting period. Over the last year, they have been working with Public Health Services to receive on-going training in the curriculum that is part of the Home Visitor Program, as well as, participating in other training opportunities that are relevant to their Program.

As of March 31st, 2014 there is a combined caseload of 25 families with new referrals coming from Public Health as needed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Theresa Rex Banks and Nicole Clarke

Early Childhood Program AGM Report

The early childhood program at Chebucto Family Center exists both as a support for other programs and as a service to the community. Throughout the course of each week, free childcare and a nutritious snack are provided to families who attend parenting courses and wellness events at the center. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school aged children are welcomed into the newly renovated downstairs play space where they are cared for, nurtured, and engaged in playful learning experiences with trained staff, students and volunteers. During drop-in programs, parents are also present in the playroom where they interact with one another with the staff and children. “Baby Playtime”, a drop-in afternoon program for families with infants has grown in popularity during the past year.

Throughout the spring, fall and winter seasons, families who have limited access to group care experiences for their children are invited to apply for a space in the early learning programs designed for 3-4 yr olds, (“Playschool”) and 4-5 yr olds school readiness program (“Preschool”). This year, we were able to add a toddler program (“Toddler Time”) and an outdoor play experience (“Backyard Adventures”). All of these programs were full to capacity. They are led by staff with certification in Early Childhood Education, and assisted by support staff or practicum students.

During the past year our long time playroom lady, Jane Hall, moved into the position of Family Day Home Consultant. She still visits us when time permits, and helps out during busy times. Parents and children love to reconnect with her. A recent ECE graduate, Jennifer David, was hired in her place, but has since moved on. Jane and I shared the responsibilities of playroom facilitator until December when I agreed to return to the position full time. We are fortunate to have the help of Andrea Townsend (program coordinator) and Krista Greencorn (program support). Many thanks to them and to other center staff for their quick response when another set of arms is needed.

Another component of our community based service work is providing practicum positions for high school and post- secondary education students. This year we had 7 MSVU students successfully complete their practicum with us. Students are given the opportunity to practice their professional childcare skills as well as become aware of the many ways our organization works to provide a diversity of services to the community. Some students return as volunteers. A student in the Options and Opportunities (O2) program at JL Ilsey high school, whose goal is to help others, was able to transfer her skills of caring for her younger siblings to provide fun play experiences for the children at the center. Thank you to Tom McCutcheon, O2 teacher, for this collaborative effort. A huge thank you goes out to our dedicated volunteer, Sylvia Sullivan. Sylvia has been a positive presence in the playroom every week for more than a year. She is usually available during our morning fitness programs when the playroom is full of infants and toddlers. Because of her help, we are able to reduce the number of times we need to call on staff to assist in the playroom plus we enjoy her delicious and nutritious homemade baked goods. We are truly grateful when a box of sugar cookies arrived – all ready to be decorated by the children during special events like Christmas and Easter parties.

The childcare staff plays an integral role during special events at the center. We team up with the rest of the staff to provide activities and/or childcare during seasonal activities like our annual back to school party(BBQ), Hallowe'en party, Christmas programs, Valentine's Day, Easter party, Ice Cream Social to name a few. Recently, with the help of our dedicated volunteer, Sylvia, we have resumed our support to the volunteer Doula program by providing child care during the monthly in-service. The playroom is made available to support the evening Incredible Years program for parents with school aged children. Except during winter months, our fenced play yard is available during regular business hours for families to use. Times and dates are noted on the monthly calendar.

Literacy and language development continues to be an integral part of everyday play at CFC. We sing, talk, dance, read stories, tell stories, "write" stories, say rhymes, act out fingerplays, draw, color, paint, etc.. all day long! We have 9 "circle time" activity boxes (Tote Tales), as well as a wide selection of children's books, a binder of flannel board stories and poems, and puzzles for every age group. Staff participates in the annual community Book Bonanza held at the Captain William Spry Community Centre in May.

Goals for next year include upgrades to the outdoor play yard, better storage for toys and equipment, increased capacity for physical activity programs for young children, and consistent staffing.

Thank you to Tammy Turple, E.D. and the Board of Directors for your ongoing support and dedication to the families we serve.

Sincerely,
Ginny Hennigar, BA; ECE
Playroom Facilitator

What Do I say about The Chebucto Family Center? Other than it has given me my sanity, boosted my confidence and not once have I left there without a smile on my face.

When you have staff like Jane and Ginny who genuinely care about your well being and also your families, you know your child is in good hands.

Just going to Yoga or joining a women's group and having that hour to yourself, you leave feeling lighter.

I don't think they realize what an impact they have on us moms, which makes me appreciate them even more.

Sincerely
A stay at home mom

Family Home Daycare Agency 2013/14

A number of years ago the process was started for Chebucto Family Centre (Then the Single Parent Centre) to become a Family Home Daycare Agency. Through this process we are granted a license by the Department of Community Services (now the Department of Education and Childhood Development) to recruit and approve family home daycare. Approved family home day care is day care provided by a care provider in their own home that is managed by a licensed agency (CFCHDA).

The Family Home Daycare Agency proposal was approved in August of 2013 after a long process of edits and updating we received funding. Unfortunately, the funding did not provide all the funds we expected and we were not able to hire any support staff which created a few more challenges for us in reaching our goals.

In September we started preparing for the program by acquiring all the necessary items needed to start recruiting Care Providers. By October we were forging ahead meeting with potential Care Providers and starting the process to signing on lots of people. Due to a few unforeseen circumstances (mainly a 3 month wait for Child Abuse Registry checks) this process took much longer than we anticipated and some people could not wait that long and went back to work. So we started with 2 Care Providers up and running and ready to provide care in January 2014. Now they needed children! By March they were both at full capacity and enjoying their new business.

We have a number of families looking for care for their children and we provide a waitlist so when we have more day homes we will be able to fill spots quite easily. Many of the waitlist families need care in the fall and winter of 2014 and we expect to provide for most, if not all their needs.

The first stage of this process has been a challenge and has left us short of our program obligation but the experience gained has provided us with the knowledge to refine our approach and increase our awareness of what and how things should be done. With the change in process for Child Abuse Registry Checks, a change of strategy for awareness of the service we provide and targeting particular groups through a variety of ways, including social media, community promotion and personal contact we expect to increase our numbers to exceed our obligations for the upcoming year and reach our program goals of 14 homes for the 2014/15.

Respectfully Submitted by
Jane Hall
Family Home Consultant

Community Programs 2013-2014

Our community programs strive to build connections with community members and provide a continuum of services that are accessible to all. This year residents were able to connect through our Spry Café, to share a meal and conversation. Once a month our program room is set up Café style, seating and serving a dinner at no cost to 45 people from the Community. In 2013/2014 we held 10 dinners that were supported by many volunteers. We would like to give thanks to the NSCC, the Board of Directors, Scotia Bank, Community West Chebucto Health Board, Ambrae Academy and St. Michael's Church Youth Group.

The Centre Coordinator, along with staff organized many social gatherings, such as our Summer BBQ, Ice Cream Social, and Halloween Party. This year, along with Centre participants we walked in the Spryfield Santa Parade.

We continue to provide other opportunities for residents to gather, through the public use of our open backyard, our weekly Community Drop-in, or one of the many programs and workshops that are offered at our Centre, such as Community Kitchen, Fitness, and skill building programs.

Throughout the year the community is able to access many services such as our Income Tax Clinic, Dal Legal Aid, and the Trading and Clothing cupboards.

The agency strives to be participant driven, and one of the ways that we ensure this takes place is through Focus Groups. This past year we held a Chili and Chat Community Focus group to receive feedback on what is working and what the community would like to see more of. It is from this that we were better able to build our upcoming programming and services. Our next Focus group is planned for this coming Spring.

In closing, we would like to thank the many volunteers that help with our Community Programs at the Centre.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tammy Turple & Andrea Townsend

Home of the Guardian Angel/Chebucto Family Centre Staff

2013– 2014

Nicole Clarke	Community Home Visitor
Theresa Rex Banks	Community Home Visitor
Erin Fair	Volunteer Doula Program Coordinator
Jessie Harold	Volunteer Doula Program Coordinator (November 2013 – current)
Jane Hall	Early Childhood Educator Family Home Daycare Consultant
Meghan Hall	Program Assistant
Ginny Hennigar	Program Coordinator Playroom Facilitator (Current)
Jennifer David	Playroom Facilitator (Fall 2013)
Deborah Hutchinson	Office Administrator
Andrea Hutchinson	Program Assistant (April 2013 – December 2013) &Centre Coordinator (current)
Kira Kelly	Parenting Counsellor
Trena Slaunwhite-Gallant	Prenatal/Postnatal Support Worker
Krista Greencorn	Program Assistant
Tammy Purple	Executive Director

Thanks to all the staff, volunteers and students for their hard work and dedication.

Home the Guardian Angel
Board of Directors
2013 - 2014

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Michelle Lawrence & Lucas Rowicki – ***Treasurer***
Tammy Moffatt – ***Secretary***

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Karen Burke

Carol Fardy

Elizabeth Grabher

Tammy Turple (Resource)

Doula Steering Committee

Carol Fardy

Pat Lefebvre

Tammy Turple

Program Statistics 2013-2014

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	# OF PARTICIPANTS
Post Placement 2	Facilitation of communications, exchanges between birth and adoptive families	39
Volunteer Doula Program	Training volunteer women to be doulas who are then matched with expectant mothers who are supported to have a positive birthing experience as well as given support with breastfeeding and early parenting	Trained 18 150 Volunteer Doulas 130 families use program/year
Prenatal/Post-Partum Support	Provides support during the prenatal period, postpartum period and up until the baby is six months old.	150+
Community Home Visitor	Provide practical and emotional support, share information about child development and link families with community resources. Families screened in through an in-depth assessment process used by Public Health	35 -40 families
Children's Program	Literacy programs are ongoing at the centre. We also offer several child/parent programs including holiday theme related activities, messy play, busy day activities and various community outings.	690
Childcare	Childcare is provided for families who are accessing our programs and support.	828
Parenting Programs	Advocacy, referrals to community resources, one-on-one support and home visits. As well as programs that focus on personal growth issues of parents and building concrete parenting skills, developing a more balanced outlook towards parenting.	700
Support Services	Ongoing support delivers a wide range of services	836
Wellness Programs	Includes a variety of services and activities offered to parents through the Single Parent Centre	984

