

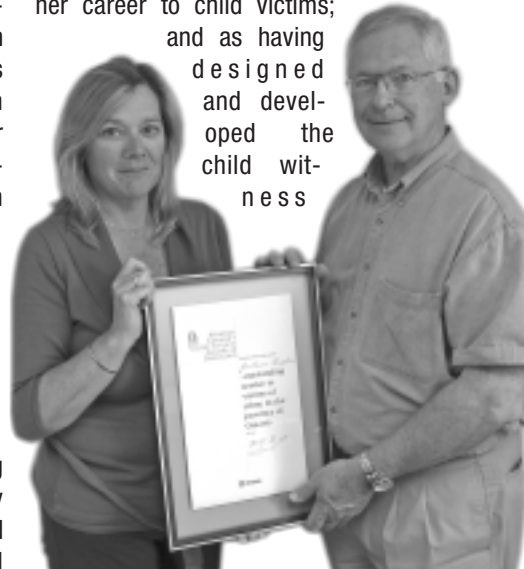


Recognition of Distinction

We are thrilled and proud to report that long-time Child Witness Centre staff member Jo-Anne Hughes was one of five individuals from across the province to receive a Victim Services Award of Distinction. The awards are a 'first' in Ontario, having been established in December 2006 by Attorney General Michael Bryant to recognize the dedication and creativity of victim services professionals and volunteers, as well as victims and others affected by violent crime who have raised the profile of victims' issues in their communities. Until now, no broad-based provincial program has existed to recognize those who support victims of crime.

Jo-Anne was honoured in a ceremony at Queen's Park on April 26 for her outstanding service to victims of crime. The Attorney General described Jo-Anne as co-founder and current Program Co-ordinator for support and court preparation services provided by the Child Witness Centre serving Waterloo Region and

Wellington County; as a person who has devoted her career to child victims; and as having designed and developed the child witness



Jack Reynolds congratulates Jo-Anne Hughes on receiving the Victim Services Award of Distinction for outstanding services to victims.

program, which is today viewed as unique and vital by organizations in the justice system and social service agencies across Ontario.

Other award recipients were Moonie Ali of Toronto for courage and perseverance in raising the profile of victim issues after losing her son to an act of senseless violence; Rick Goodwin, executive director of The Men's Project in Ottawa, for developing an innovative treatment program for male survivors of sexual abuse; Brian Weller of York Region for volunteer efforts with the Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services program; and Lynn Zammit of Waterloo Region who worked to develop and implement a school-based Choices for Youth Program and a restorative justice initiative aimed at school violence and bullying.

"The outstanding results of their efforts make Ontario communities stronger," said Minister Bryant.

Another Successful Gala

We are pleased to report that with the tremendous support of the community and local businesses, this year's gala raised \$12,200.

Held on February 10th at The Pines in Cambridge, the evening included a gourmet dinner, silent auction, raffle, special photo memento and dancing.



Van Dokas, Patti Dokas, Cynthia Schaefer, Peter Schaefer

Emceeding the event once again was Mike Murdoch, Assistant Crown Attorney, who provided his own first hand insights into the important work of the agency.

The Pines was packed - 164 people attended, up 36% from last year. "We exceeded our expectations, and are always humbled by the generosity and overall community support we receive" says Linda Mark, Resource Development Co-ordinator. Special thanks to our major sponsors, including Sorbara Law, Jim and Heidi Balsillie, Duncan McLean, Rowan Williams Davies and Irwin Inc., The Pines and The Record. In addition, the gala would

not be a success without help from board members and other volunteers who contribute many hours to ensure its success.

A huge thank you to all those who attended and supported this annual event.



Alex Matessich, Mandy Matessich, Andrea Young, John Young

Symposium Speakers Educate and Enthuse Grade 8 Students

The Child Witness Centre recently hosted its 4th annual day-long youth symposium. More than 1,600 grade 8 students from across Waterloo Region and Wellington County packed the Empire Studio Theatres in Kitchener to listen to eleven outstanding presentations. Topics included:

- Bullying—addressing bullying, youth violence, gangs and racism
- Cyberstalking—dangers of the internet
- Making a positive difference
- Hero Inside—overcoming obstacles to find the hero inside ourself
- Choices We Make—making the right choices when it comes to drugs
- Beating the Pecking Order—being a little bigger and better in how we treat others
- Achieving Goals—lessons from a professional football player
- Take a Risk—Be Stupendous—an inspirational message for all students
- Beautiful Minds—dispelling the myths about mental illness
- Become Who U Can Be—challenging student to think about who they want to be
- Making Care Contagious

For more about the topics and speakers, go to www.childwitness.com/youth.html.

This exciting and educational event was made possible by the generous support of the Sertoma and La Sertoma Clubs.

This annual symposium is a unique event for students, promotes the well-being of children and youth, and helps them with the challenges they face daily. We aim to support parents and schools in giving kids the essential building blocks and assets they need to ensure that each can reach her/his potential.



Special thanks to all 25 volunteers who help us with this event, and to Sertoma/La Sertoma, who share our vision of the value of such an event for the youth in our community.



Flipped for Pancakes

Thanks to our major sponsors, Piller's and Delta Kitchener, and all the people who took the time to attend the 9th annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Luncheon on February 20th, this year's event was another great success. A delicious buffet of pancakes, bacon, sausage, ham, sliced fruit and drinks was served between noon and 1:30 pm, all for \$10 per person.

"We're thankful to the many people who attend each year, and to those attending for the first time. Many make this an annual tradition for getting together over lunch with work associates or friends in a relaxed setting to help a good cause" said Alexandra Hardy, President of the Board in her comments at the luncheon.

We're particularly grateful to the management and staff at the Delta Kitchener for their generosity with this event over the past nine years. They are an organization which truly "gives back to the community."

Electronic Newsletter?

We are always looking for ways to reduce our costs – and one way is to offer an electronic copy of our newsletter. For those wishing to receive the newsletter this way, please email Linda Mark at linda.mark@childwitness.com.

We will begin to offer this option in our fall newsletter.



Caseworker's Notebook

Internet Luring

For generations parents have ingrained in their children the time-honoured rule: "Don't talk to strangers." But that rule has a new meaning now that people can talk to strangers all over the world via the Internet.

Talking in chat groups and through e-mail is nothing like talking over the telephone or meeting someone in person. There is no eye contact and there is no chance to pick up meaning from the cadence and rhythm of the human voice. People on the Internet can log on using fake names, they can create whole new identities that are tough to challenge.

The scary thing is that many people who talk and chat on the Internet think it's perfectly safe... **BUT IT'S NOT.**

Canada is one of the world's top Internet nations with millions of people of all ages going online every day. That makes young Canadians a prime target for "cyber-stalkers," who are just waiting to feed off the insecurities of children and ultimately lure them away from the safety of their computers, and their homes.

In 2002 the Criminal Code was amended to provide a maximum five-year prison sentence for people caught using the Internet to lure children. However the best defence is a watchful, involved parent. One major problem is that most of the time parents do not know when their kids are in trouble.

Here are some signs to look out for:

- Long hours in the computer room
- Close windows on their computer when you enter the room
- Secretive about Internet activities
- Behavioural changes
- Always doing homework on the Internet but always in chat groups and getting behind with school work
- Unexplained long distance telephone call charges
- Will not say who they are talking to
- Unexplained pictures on computer

The Internet can open up the world for our children and expand their knowledge and views; but it also contains many hidden dangers that exploit the safety and innocence of our children. The frightening reality is that the Internet is being used to lure young children into dangerous situations.

Following is a set of rules which parents should discuss with their kids and get their agreement on.

Kid's Rules for Online Safety

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.
2. I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
4. I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
5. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the service provider.
6. I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.
7. I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even my best friends) other than my parents.
8. I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.
9. I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.

Thank you



Child
Witness
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Serving Waterloo Region and Wellington County

Every donation helps us provide child victims and witnesses with the support they need through the difficult challenge of testifying in court.

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Child Witness Centre

100 Lancaster Street East
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*On average it costs \$350 per child to provide court support services

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