



www.beginnings.ca

Our new Beginnings Resource Booklet will be sent to Pregnancy Centres, public health units, schools, and partner agencies across the province.

Our New Look!

It is spring and what better time to launch our new Beginnings look! We were blessed to receive a gift of talents and time from a generous donor. This company has updated our "brand" so we are ready for our 25th Anniversary coming up in 2010. Our new website is "under construction" but will be up and running later this spring. Stay tuned to hear more in the coming months.

Beginnings' Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 12, 2009
6:00 p.m. - light supper followed by the AGM

Hamilton District Christian High School
92 Glancaster Road, Ancaster

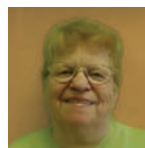
RSVP by May 4, 2009
905-528-6665 or
email info@beginnings.ca

Celebrating Our Volunteers: People with Big Hearts

Volunteers contribute in a multitude of ways to the work and ministry of Beginnings. Here we profile a few of our wonderful volunteers; due to space constraints, we had to limit it to two from each Beginnings office.

Betty Parker (Woodstock)

Teen Mom's Group,
Fundraisers: 5 years



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

Well, I had been retired for about a year and I was beginning to feel a bit bored. I had thought about volunteering somewhere when I happened to meet Janet (the Director at that time) who invited me to volunteer at Beginnings.

What is most rewarding?

I have a spot soft for the girls and I love the babies – so I get my "baby fix" each week. It is good to feel needed and to be able to help out.

Thoughts about volunteering:

It is rewarding and it meets a need in the community.

Lindsay Croft (Woodstock)

Teen Mom's Group,
Fundraisers, Care Closet,
Promotion: 1 year



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

As a Christian with a nursing background, I wanted to share my knowledge and experience related to maternal-child nursing with the clients of Beginnings. I desired to contribute to meeting the needs of these individuals as they face the challenge of parenthood.

What is the most rewarding?

Having the opportunity to use my knowledge and skills to support a client through their pregnancy and following the delivery of their child in hopes of spreading God's love to each and everyone I encounter.

Thoughts about volunteering:

Volunteering at Beginnings is a nice way of sharing your knowledge, expertise and love for others. You are able to touch the lives of many individuals in need of God's love.

Harry Alkema (Hamilton)

Board of Directors,
Lifeline Link to Satellite offices,
Treasurer: 4 years



Why do you give your time to B.?

Beginnings is an organization that freely helps others in a time of real need. Beginnings volunteers value life and are living examples of its work and charity.

What is most rewarding & thoughts about volunteering:

From a board member's perspective, the needs of Beginnings are practical and part of real life. Through the Beginnings counsellors, we are connected to the community and some of its deepest needs. When the problems of life or those facing the Board seem insurmountable, God has always unexpectedly provided. That's the real joy of the volunteer. The Lord has always brought the right person, at the right time and at the right place. What could be more wonderful? It's uncanny.

Beginnings 2008: The Year in Review



Cobourg

by Tanya Knox, Director

I love the name of an organization in Cobourg called "Wrap Around." Essentially, a team of volunteers wrap around a client in need of help. Similarly, Beginnings strives to do just that. God wraps us in His forgiveness and love which enables us to reach out to clients and wrap them and their babies in our love and support. One client said "I feel like Beginnings is a place to go to where I am listened to and you really care about me".
Thank you, Lord, for giving us the hearts and souls to carry out this ministry and show others your great love.

Some new and exciting changes that have transpired over the last year include the launch of a new program for moms and dads entitled "Earn While You Learn." Clients have the opportunity to earn baby dollars and learn new parenting skills through viewing videos and doing assignments. This program allows for building trusting relationships, education, and continued support for our clients.

God opened another door for Beginnings to expand through our partnership with an organization called Port Hope For Youth (PHFY) which provides a place for young people to access a variety of support services in one location called "The Hub." In September we welcomed our newest staff member Gina Demill who works part-time at the Hub providing support and pregnancy tests to the youth of Port Hope. As a result of partnering with PHFY, Beginnings staff handed out 700 business cards and goodie bags to the students of the local Port Hope high school.

This spring Beginnings continues to grow and flourish. Thank you for your continued prayers

and your faithful contributions to this ministry. God Bless all of our faithful supporters.



Guelph

by Bonnie D'Elia, Director

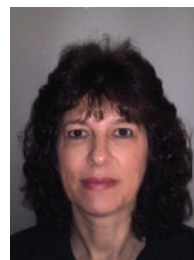
2008 was a year of firsts for Beginnings Guelph! In February we held our first Square Dance fundraiser. We had lots of fun, increased our funding, and had a great opportunity to raise awareness among many who were new to Beginnings.

In the fall we ran our first lifeskills/parenting program *Home with a Heart*, an 11 week course designed to teach the art of making home a special place for the family. Seven young women and their 10 children attended. The participants really enjoyed the learning, the social interaction, and the childcare service provided. This was our first time to offer programming with other Christian-based partners - the Salvation Army and Royal City Christian Life Centre. What a privilege to work together in this way!

2008 was also the first year for our new receipting program, an increase in both monthly and online giving, several private fundraisers with designations to Beginnings Guelph, and a budget of over \$90,000. It was the first year for our new Women's Dessert Evening fundraiser, *Heart to Heart*. It was the first year for diaper donations from stores, using a city trail for our Run/Walk, several new volunteers, our new Administrative Assistant - Jenny DeVries, and an increase in our office hours. It was the first year for high school presentations to 4 classes of Grade 10's, and the highest numbers yet in our statistics: 1730 client contacts for counselling and support, 69 new clients, 527 requests for material aid, 1100 community partner contacts, and 57 inquiries related to adoption and abortion. What a year!!

Thank you for enabling us to be God's hand extended during difficult journeys - a taste of His unconditional love and grace to all who come through our doors. As Phillip Keller says, "It is God's intention that we should touch many lives, enrich many spirits, and bring many souls into His special care and management." We could never serve as we do without your support.

I am continually amazed at the fact that when we trust God enough to take a step toward Him in hope, faith or courage, He meets us right there - and then equips us to take the next step. It's been an exciting journey in 2008 and we can't wait to see what God has in store for 2009. May we "live a life worthy of the calling we have received" (Eph. 4:1) for we know without a doubt that "the One who calls us **is faithful and He will do it.**" (1 Thes. 5:24)



Woodstock

by Tania Whyte, Director

Blessings from Woodstock Beginnings! How appropriate that as the new director I get to experience so many new 'Beginnings,' and so many new blessings. New beginnings are always so exciting and God has a wonderful plan for all our blessings.

Although I have been with Beginnings Woodstock only since February 2009 I can see how God has so richly blessed this ministry through the staff, volunteers, advisory committee and donors:

- The staff, Janet, Ginnie, Beth and Michelle, work together seamlessly providing support through counselling, advocacy, fundraising, event planning and, most of all, care and concern for all our clients.
- The Advisory Committee is comprised of a dedicated group of individuals that come

together out of compassion and love for God's people.

- Devoted volunteers provide support to the staff by providing an extra hand and a loving heart.
- Our donors are faithful to us even through difficult economic times, supporting us financially and with prayer.

God has blessed this ministry for a reason, so that we in turn can be a blessing to the families we serve. I pray that as Director that I, too, can be a blessing to this ministry.

² "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

Genesis 12, 2

God has a plan and always offers opportunities for new 'beginnings.' I am very happy to be part of His plan here in Woodstock. I have been fortunate that God has given me many opportunities to stretch and grow throughout my life. Please pray for us as we grow this ministry into a new phase and pray that we continue to be a blessing to all God's people.



Hamilton

by Kerry Vandergrift,
Executive Director

2008 was a great year of growth for Beginnings.

Not only does our Hamilton office do the

adoption work for all our satellite offices, we have expanded:

- our counselling staff to include Bonnie Archer
- our educational services to include school programs, community panels, and more programs for adoptive couples
- our board by new members – Sue VanEgdom, Jennifer Adema and Eric Andrade – adding to the talent and generosity of those already serving
- our post adoption counselling services

- our regions we are serving – we are looking forward to setting up new satellite offices in other communities.

Last year we worked with 31 birth moms and 19 dads, placed 12 babies in open adoptions, and our foster parents cared for babies for a total of 177 days last year. We served an average of 15 - 20 clients a month at our Living Rock setting for each of our prenatal and parenting classes. As always we need to thank our faithful volunteers – Emily Beijes, Juanita Peters and Cathy Zorn. Donations this year helped purchase resources for the young women in these groups.

We welcome Tania Whyte, new Director for Beginnings Woodstock and give a very special thank you to outgoing Director Janet Charlesworth who continues to work with the moms and grandmothers groups at the centre.

Although economic times are tough for most of us right now, we are reminded that many of our clients live with this uncertainty every day of their lives. They still need our prayers and to be able to count on Beginnings in times of need. Thank you for your continuing support for the mission outreach work we do.

Beginnings Goes to School

As a new initiative, Beginnings Hamilton office is piloting a program aimed to reach youth in a variety of settings including schools, youth agencies, and clubs. Our goal is to support healthy choices and build ethical awareness regarding the link between decision making and potential consequences.



Our plan is to implement a 2-3 session program which looks at the components of healthy choices and decision making. The *loveU2 Series: Baby Smarts*, has been selected as our foundation. Specifically, we are working with their program titled "Through the Eyes of a Child" where teens are challenged to consider how a child is affected when parents are unprepared.

This interactive program engages youth to explore what babies require in order to thrive. The content sketches out a larger context for helping teens make wise relationship and sexual choices and can be summarized as, "It's not just about me." The program endeavors to explore the bigger picture including relationships, values, and deeper meanings, as well as the needs of children, family, and community. It is about building knowledge and also real skills.

We are currently working with several high schools to pilot this program. Thus far, the feedback from teachers has been very positive and we are eager to take the next step.

Looking for Part Time Work?

Join our Beginnings work family ... maybe the time is right.

We are looking for an organized, enthusiastic person with a heart for Beginnings' mission to assist our Public Relations & Development Coordinator in planning events and special projects. Please email us at info@beginnings.ca or call if you are interested. We would love to hear from you!

Celebrating Our Volunteers cont.

Linda Geerts (Hamilton)
Tea Fundraiser,
Stuffing Envelopes: 3 years



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

Quite simply, I was asked to. I am a stay at home grandma and so I have the time to help out.

What is most rewarding?

Knowing that in whatever one does, it lightens the workload of someone else who has a more important task to do with their time.

Thoughts about volunteering:

Everyone has a few hours a month to help others, you just have to find the right match. Beginnings is the right match for me.

Lenore Mutton (Cobourg)
Volunteer Counsellor: 10 years



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

Because I believe in this ministry and want to be a part of it.

What is most rewarding?

Seeing girls choose to carry their babies and then come in to show the progress. We so enjoy seeing these beautiful babies as they grow.

Thoughts about volunteering:

You can make a difference in the lives of girls with unplanned pregnancy by encouraging them and giving them moral support.

Taryn Williams (Cobourg)
Co-op Student: 2 months



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

I believe that Beginnings offers a necessary service within our community. Anyone can gain a team of supportive people just by walking through the door and that is something I want to be a part of.

What is most rewarding?

Most rewarding, for me, is to watch the growth of our pregnant clients.

Thoughts about volunteering:

It takes commitment and dedication, but overall it is a very rewarding experience.

Kim Cochrane (Guelph)
Volunteer Counsellor & Post
Abortion Support: 5 years



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

I have chosen to give my time to Beginnings because of my own struggles as a young woman. Not having a place to go and speak to someone who could inform well and be neutral and compassionate to my present state and my future. I want to give women everything possible to nurture a safe place so they can make well-informed decisions, spiritually, emotionally and mentally.

What is most rewarding?

Getting to really know the women who come in for pregnancy, adoption, abortion and post

abortion counselling. It is a privilege to come alongside each woman's journey of struggles, hurts, fears, dreams, healing and choices.

Thoughts about volunteering:

If you are thinking about volunteering as a Beginnings counsellor, I would suggest you ask yourself and ponder the following; What is love? That you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his or her life (or time) for another. John 15:12-13.

Heather Farnsworth (Guelph)
Care Closet: 9 years & served
6 years on Advisory Committee



Why do you give your time to Beginnings?

I want to serve God in our downtown Guelph community and the Beginnings Care Cupboard is a great fit for my own skills.

What is most rewarding?

Our clients are always amazed that people care enough to donate baby clothes, diapers, furniture, etc. We tell them it is because of God's great love, and they are passing that along to others in need! I know that we are encouraging our clients to be better parents.

Thoughts about volunteering:

When you give of your time and energy to people in need, you feel a deep sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. God is "no man's debtor." You will be blessed ... try it, you will find this is true!

Beginnings Info

Executive Director: Kerry Vandergrift
Clinical Director: Carol Lavell
Secretary: Bonnie Vander Stoep
Development & Publicity: Dorothy Isaac

Board of Directors:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Jennifer Adema | Karin Boonstra |
| Harry Alkema | Malita VanderKruk |
| Eric Andrade | Rev. Arie Van Eek |
| Clarence Bick | Sue VanEgdom |

Our Mission: In the conviction that life is a gift from God, Beginnings provides services related to pregnancy and adoption.

Satellite Pregnancy Care Centres:

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| Cobourg | 905.373.4575 |
| Guelph | 519.763.7980 |
| Woodstock | 519.421.2127 |



**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

**Beginnings Hamilton
Annual Fall Walk-a-thon**

Saturday October 3rd, 2009

Beginnings Counselling & Adoption Services of Ontario, Inc.

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Hamilton, ON
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