

Keystones

Our Annual NewsReport

Fall 2001

Volume 15

Centre for Research and Education in Human Services

Sustain ability



**Inside
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Clarifying the concept

Why do we think money is the prime enabler?

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Editor's note

by Purnima Sundar

Welcome to our Fall 2001 NewsReport! As the first NewsReport of the new millennium, I feel that it is fitting that our focus is on the issue of "sustainability". This concept is one that continues to challenge us in creating interventions that are responsive to the needs of a community. In many cases, sustainability in community organizations refers to the ability of that group or agency to ensure that the effects of an intervention can be preserved beyond the completion of a project, and often plays an important role in gaining funding. Despite the importance of working towards sustainable interventions, this term can be interpreted in many ways, and as such, the routes to sustainability vary.

The pieces in this year's NewsReport reflect this idea, each speaking from a unique perspective. Kristen Roderick grounds us in this discussion by presenting some definitions around sustainability from a macro-level point of view. Laura Doric describes sustainability within the context of her work with the Safe & Sound project, and Melissa

Pound illustrates this issue using piece of fiction. Christiane Sadeler and D'Arcy Farlow discuss the concept of sustainability from a funding perspective, and Jan Lubell talks about some of the challenges to sustainability by using a case example. Finally, Andrew Taylor discusses the role of sustainability in community research.

As recent events have shown us, the world we live in is changing daily. Consequently, traditional ideas of sustainability as working to maintain something, whether it works or not, are no longer useful. Rather, the term "sustainability" has come to refer to a process of evaluating, responding to, and growing from changes that present themselves. In other words, instead of keeping things the same, sustainability now reflects maintaining a focussed commitment to change. Here at the Centre, we are excited by the opportunities this presents.

All the best,
Purnima Sundar

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Coordinator's note: The power of innovation in sustainability

by Joanna Ochocka

"Innovation is a key driver of productivity," we read in the last issue of 'Profit\$', a newsletter for entrepreneurs published by Business Development Bank of Canada. More and more small businesses, not-for-profit organizations and other community groups rely on innovative strategies to achieve a sustainable advantage in the global playing field. According to a recent report from Human Resources Development Canada, factors such as shifting consumer demands, increasing global competition and implementing new technologies have hit large companies hard, forcing them to cut back on operations. Small businesses, however, are proving that they can be more resilient, respond more quickly to changes and take advantage of new opportunities. The Centre for Research and Education is one of these companies that rely on creative management, innovative financing, clear vision, and ongoing marketing as main factors for long term sustainability.

I see our Centre as a model of sustainability for other similar organizations and groups. I see it when I look at some facts from our history. In the beginning, almost twenty years ago, the Centre was located in the basement of its first coordinator/funder's house. For a few years this basement was a place where participatory action research was pioneered in Canada. I still remember my first impression of the Centre when I was hired as a senior researcher in June of 1991. By that time, the Centre had moved on to the old house on the corner of College and Duke in Kitchener. It was crowded, housing four organizations. There were old desks and chairs, donated orange dividers in the researchers' office and a single computer shared by everybody. The state of the offices gave no hint of the innovative thinking, excellent works produced by the Centre researchers, enthusiasm, or the Centre's strong belief in creating a better future.

Today the Centre's location has changed as and so has the level of its work. We are housed in a new

larger place. We have a larger team of trained and experienced researchers and staff. We work on a larger number of projects, and we are more recognized and nationally established as an organization than we were years ago. But there are still a number of things that are the same. We are enthusiastic believers who practice and teach collaborative approaches that link research closely with action and change. We continue to engage innovators, providers, funders and consumers of human services in ongoing reflection and action to make our community a better place. We still challenge ourselves to listen and to learn from, people at the margin; their perspectives ground us in understandings of the interrelationships within systems. For almost 20 years we have been slowly building a solid organization that is independent, flexible in structure and innovative in thinking; however, we have not changed our vision and our values.

Our organization continues to thrive because we make an effort to sustain the work we do more than the organization or structure we have created. The Centre is an independent, flexible and entrepreneurial organization that is project funded. Finances come from variety of sources including government, human service organizations, foundations, universities and individuals. Our budget is like a large puzzle that fits together almost every month by responding quickly with appropriate Centre staffing. The participatory management is key in nurturing creativity and a results-oriented culture. Our organizational effectiveness depends on the leadership of senior researchers, their inclusive processes of involving others, risk taking and efficiency in budgeting funds. It also depends on expertise and hard work of other researchers and administrative staff. Our management focuses on accountability, reflectiveness and mutual supportiveness. It requires that we constantly reflect on the past, present, and future to ensure continuity. It forces us to work towards

common goals and to move from "I" to "WE", replacing competition in promoting individual interests. Staying open to opportunities, taking risks and, developing creative ways to operate makes our organization look confidently toward the future.

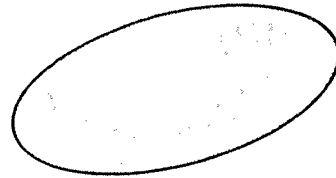
Innovation has been the hallmark of sustainability for the Centre for Research and Education. We believe that innovation and learning are also the key factors in developing future communities that are supportive and responsive to all their citizens, including those at the margin. I invite you to join us in this important work in 2002. I also invite you to celebrate the sustainability of the Centre for Research and Education through our upcoming 20th anniversary events.

Be well,
Joanna Ochocka

The Women's Research Centre (WRC), an organization located in Vancouver, BC, doing Participatory Action Research in the area of women's issues has recently closed its doors. We are pleased to inform you that all WRC publications are now part of our Centre library, including:

- "Research for Change: Participatory Action Research for Community Groups",
- "Keeping on Track: An Evaluation Guide for Community Groups",
- "Feminist Action, Institutional Reaction: Responses to Wife Assault", and
- "Recollecting Our Lives: Women's Experiences of Childhood Sexual Abuse"

The spirit of Participatory Action Research on women's issues will continue on, as we at the Centre are looking forward to using these resources to expand our work in this important area.



Shifting the Paradigm in Community Mental Health

by Geoffrey Nelson, Joanna Ochocka, and John Lord

University of Toronto Press

Shifting the paradigm in community mental health.
by Geoffrey Nelson, Joanna Ochocka, and John Lord (2001). Toronto: University of Toronto Press

This ground-breaking study examines changes in the values and practices within community mental health that occurred between 1984 and 1998 in the Kitchener-Waterloo area and province wide. *Shifting the Paradigm in Community Mental Health* is a valuable guide for research for consumers and administrators in the mental health field as well as in other areas of human services.

Order your copy today! Contact the Centre at the address provided on the last page of this NewsReport or visit www.crehs.on.ca.

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Defining sustainability

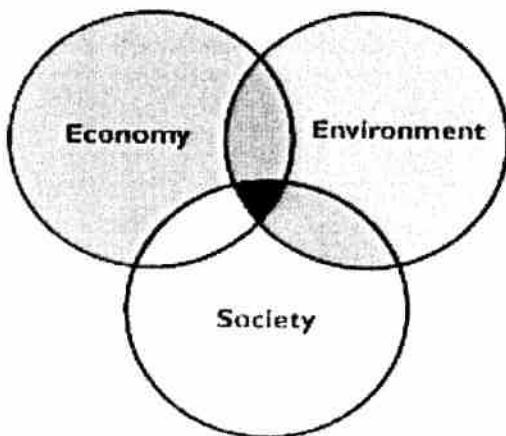
by Kristen Roderick

"Sustainability" is a concept raised frequently in discussions in the human services, but it is often difficult to define because it assumes different meaning in different contexts. As a social work student with a concentration in community development, I approach sustainability from a macro-level perspective. As part of my practicum placement here at the Centre, I have been conducting a literature review looking at various aspects of sustainability in organizations. I am finding that resources focusing on the organizational aspects of sustainability are sorely lacking. Literature that concentrates on sustainable community development as a larger issue (i.e., from a macro point of view), however, seems to be more accessible. I think that looking at these broader issues is a good starting point for developing an understanding of sustainability and its relevance to community organizations.

Sustainability: the ability of a community, organization, or program to maintain long-term outcomes.¹

A holistic approach to communities

Developing sustainable communities and practising sustainable community work begins by looking at communities holistically. This means understanding and appreciating the interaction between economic, social, and environmental needs.



Acknowledging that people and communities exist within this complex system helps us to develop sustainable community organizations that are both shaped by and in turn shape each of these considerations. Developing sustainable community organizations, therefore, requires us to look at each of these aspects both individually as well as in terms of how each affects one another.

Wide citizen participation

"Sustainable development is a new paradigm of decision making for all sectors of society".²

Sustainable initiatives rely on wide citizen participation. Alliances must be formed between and across governments, organizations, and community members in order to look at a community's issues and needs through a wider lens. Ownership over the initiative and accountability for outcomes needs to be shared equally across the community, and each of these groups should be encouraged to take on leadership roles in various ways. Involvement from government representatives, researchers, educators, businesses, non-profit organizations, service users, and other community members works to secure the foundation of an initiative, improving its chances of continuation.

Here at the Centre, we continue to work towards developing sustainable community initiatives through many of our projects. The study on Immigrant Youth, for example, found that issues affecting newcomer youth in one area of their lives also had an impact on other areas. In other words, from an ecological point of view, each of these aspects was considered to be interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, in order to create effective, sustainable solutions to respond to the challenges they faced, it was important that collaboration between family members, friends, schools, and the larger community took place. The Immigrant Youth project provides us with a good

example of wide stakeholder involvement aimed at developing a sustainable intervention.

Sustainable community development is a shift away from focussing on the deficits of individuals and communities. It requires the courage to think more broadly to create a common vision for the future, taking more than just the obvious factors into consideration. It requires a willingness to share resources and skills, and it blurs class distinctions and reduces power imbalances. It focuses on community strengths and requires cooperation in working toward a common goal. Sustainable community development "encourage[s] decision-making that is long range, democratic, participatory, and respectful of all stakeholders". Keeping these values at the forefront when developing community initiatives is the first step in putting these plans into action.

**Components of a Sustainable
Community Initiative:³
A Summary**

- ✧ Community members create a vision for the future.
- ✧ The vision balances social, economic, and environmental needs.
- ✧ The vision is representative of a wide cross-section of community views.
- ✧ Community members are responsible for and committed to reaching this vision.

¹Howard, Dale & Howard, Peggy Ann (2001). Towards sustainability of human services, Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation 15(1): 25 - 40.

²Promoting Community Sustainability: Linking Research and Action, Ibid.

³Sustainable Measures, found at www.sustainablemeasures.com



Kristen Roderick, an MSW student who recently completed a practicum with the Centre and who will be returning in the new year as a researcher with the CSI project, organized an art exhibit on Saturday, December 8th, 2001 at Muses Café called "Men in Emotion." The exhibit featured poetry, songs, letters and paintings created by men in the community in celebration of the women they love. The evening was a fantastic success and a wonderful way to commemorate December 6th.

Staff Milestones

Congratulations to Holly and Steve Williamson who are expecting their first child any day now! We wish them all the best in the new experiences they will share as parents!



Rich and Jen Janzen and big sister Hannah are pleased to welcome new family member Katie Marie who was born on Sunday, December 9th, 2001! Jen and Katie are both healthy and we wish this growing family all the best!



Purnima Sundar, a full time researcher with the Centre throughout the last year, has decided to return to school to begin working towards her Ph.D. in Social Work at WLU. Purnima will continue her work with the Centre on a part-time basis. Good luck in the years to come Purnima!



Former Centre staff member Danuta Lubicka is the proud mother of a new baby boy named Daniel. The Lubicka family is happy and healthy in Oregon. We wish them all the best!



Jody Lee Brown and Allison Rice-Roberts, both former practicum students at the Centre have successfully defended their theses as required by the Masters in Community Psychology program at Wilfrid Laurier University. Congratulations to them both!



Clarifying the concept of sustainability: A community member's perspective

by Laura Doric

Definitions of "Sustain":

To uphold, support, to endure without yielding;
To under go or suffer, to keep up the courage,
resolution or spirits;
To keep up or maintain, keep in effect or being;
To maintain by providing with food, drink, etc.;
To corroborate, confirm; and
To uphold or support as being true or just.

Source: Funk & Wagnall's Standard Desk Dictionary (1976)

I began my examination of the term "sustainability" with the above dictionary definitions. These definitions, I felt, could be immediately connected to my work with the Safe and Sound Project, a local crime prevention initiative, and my concerns for its sustainability.

The Kingsdale community has worked hard to build and maintain the partnerships necessary to uphold and support the work that needs to be done in order to reach our goals of creating an enduring intervention. Despite suffering many blows to our efforts, we have managed to keep up the courage and spirit needed to maintain our effectiveness with regard to the goals of community safety and crime prevention. The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Council has adequately provided and sustained the nourishment required for our continued existence and this corroboration has worked to support and uphold our just and true mission.

This line of thinking clarifies for me that the 2 major components necessary for the Safe & Sound Project to sustain itself are 1) adequate funding, and 2) a network of committed people to a common cause. In addition, maintaining momentum towards the cause is closely connected to the quality of results/products produced. When a

process produces results that are measurable, it becomes easier to maintain momentum and acquire funding. This, in turn, gives rise to the next step: a discussion of replication. In particular, when a set of desirable results is achieved, the process needs to be structured for the purpose of replication. I see this as a circular process in that a product is developed, replicated, and then sustained. However, if a process is unproductive or inefficient, the momentum required to keep things moving is absent. Too often, we continue to replicate these ineffective practices without giving enough attention to the effectiveness of the process (e.g., we continue to incarcerate criminals thinking that this will reduce crime and change human behaviour without thinking about whether or not this is truly effective).

Here are two examples of sustainability in human services, each having a profound effect on my personal, daily life. Which of the two will prove to be sustainable very much depends on what it is that we are trying to sustain (commitment to the cause) and how much we value the results of our efforts.

As an educator caught in a turbulent political battle between the Provincial Government and the Ontario Teacher's Federation, I question how long the Education Reform process can sustain its current level of constant change. I used to believe that change can be as good as a rest, but in this case, I'm completely exhausted. The Education Reform process is about results: it is looking for higher test scores at a lower price. To a hard working taxpayer with children in school this sounds like a good thing. However, the way that the government has chosen to pursue this goal (i.e., the process) is what I disagree with. In the current Education Reform model, the product is emphasized and made far more important than the process. This may work for numbers on a spreadsheet, but my children and my students

mean much more to me than a statistic on a list of test scores.

As a community developer involved with the Safe and Sound Project, I question how anyone can possibly argue with the goal of reducing crime and increasing safety. This project is also concerned with results or products: it is looking for lower crime rates through the process of social development and community mobilization. In this example, the process is fundamentally linked to the product. Here lies the key to sustaining the delivery of various human services. In particular, when the process or the delivery of an intervention motivates and inspires one to reach a desirable outcome, these are linked in a productive way. Here, you can have your cake and eat it too, and that is something I am definitely interested in sustaining.

New Journal Articles in 2001

Ochocka, J., Janzen R., & Nelson, G. (in press). Sharing power and knowledge: Professional and mental health consumer/survivor researchers working together in a participatory action research project. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*

Dewa, C., Durbin, J., Wasylenki, D., Ochocka, J., Eastabrooke, S., Baydell, K., & Goering, P. (in press). Considering a multi-site study? Taking the leap and what to look for before you do. *Journal of Community Psychology*.

Reeve, P., Cornell, S., D'Costa, B., Janzen, R. & Ochocka, J. (in press). Consumer researchers speak about their experience in a community mental health research project. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*

Nelson, G., Lord, J., & Ochocka, J. (2001). Empowerment and mental health in community: Narratives of psychiatric consumer/survivors. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11(2), 125-142

p.1
What would it be like to make more constructive use of the information you already have?



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The bigger picture

by Melissa Pound

Yeah, she's a good woman. Her attachments were always particular, though. She'll just latch on to something--forget the big picture. Remember that whole thing with Sandra? Right, right, you weren't around then. It was the last one. Joan. I'll tell you the story--it's classic Maude. What's that? No, it's not long. I'll make it quick.

It was a couple years ago. This place was a mess--whoa boy! You think we got problems now, you shoulda seen it! Young people running wild, drunkenness, all kinds of different people moving in, half of them not speaking English. What's that? Oh, I love foreigners. Don't get me wrong there. Variety's the spice and all that...yeah, yeah. Anyways, like I was saying, things were out of control. Joan came and her and some of us were trying to get the neighborhood centre going...it was like pulling teeth getting these people interested! But I was right in there-- you know me, I'm a booster.

What's that? Yeah, Maude. Well, I was trying to get her involved, you know. She's lived here pretty near her whole life. So we go to her house, Joan and me. Knock on the door, no answer. I can hear kids howling in there, and I know Maude doesn't have any kids, so I'm thinking maybe some little hooligans broke in. I knock again. Still no answer, and then I hear Maude yell! So I turn to Joan and I say "we better go in," and I open the door real quick--and there's Maude and what looks like ten thousand children! Just milling around, popsicles everywhere!

So I say to her, "Maude!" and before I can get the question out, she says "They're Sandra's. She needs someplace to keep them, she's over getting six eighty-five at the 7-11. You'd think they could at least make it seven bucks eleven, just to match."

Well, I never held Sandra in too high esteem, and I made it clear enough. I said, about the seven bucks eleven, I said "But then the lotto would likely cost \$6.49, and with the tickets that one buys, it'd be a loss to her." Ha! So she starts swearing, e

Maude does, right in front of Joan and the kids, calling me an old coot--we're friends so long she can get away with it, but--

Oh, sorry. Well, to make a long story short, Maude was sitting these kids and not taking a dime for it, and her worker found out and cut off her benefits. Cause if she could take kids in, she could work, right? Joan tried to arrange it so the sitting could be paid, tried to get Sandra a subsidy she could pay Maude with, but it took a while, and by then Maude had been living at my house for a month and Sandra had left town with all her kids. So then Joan helped get the benefits back, and the problem was solved.

But soon enough someone else came along. I think it was that old Chinese woman. Then it was someone else. She just gets attached, Maude does, and won't let go--completely ignores the big picture. Now she's got herself cut off from benefits again, same story as before. Another family, six kids in this one. Yeah, I'll tell her. She won't go, though. Like I say, she never thinks long-term. She'll stay with me again for a while...it'll always be like that. Oh, I could tell you stories! Oh, you do, eh? Where are you off to? Court! Who is it this time? Oh, the landlord, right. Well, yeah, okay. I'll see you at the meeting tomorrow night. Okay, right. Bye.



Centre Researchers at the Community Forum on Hate Crime and Bias Activity in the City of London on July 18th, 2001 (from left to right): Rich Janzen, Jonathan Lomotey, Andrew Taylor and Janos Botschner.

Reclaiming the original definition of sustainability

by Christiane Sadeler &
D'Arcy Farlow

"The relationships which make up the community are part of our human life support. We need to protect and sustain this life support system. Building sustainable communities is the place to begin." (M. Novak, No Place Like Home: Building

Let's begin by putting the person into the picture. We are two women, with many years of community development work between us, attempting (in a hurriedly, unsustainable fashion) to provide some thoughtful comments on the meaning of sustainability. Immediately, we are struck by the misuse of the term. As with the terms "empowerment" and "capacity building", "sustainability" has become a tired, over-used word, co-opted by government, funders and others. The result is a narrower definition than that which was originally intended. Sustainability used to be a powerful concept when it challenged all of us to develop a harmonious balance between our ecological, economic, and human environments. The goal of this challenge was to develop vital communities without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Our Common Future).

How is it, then, that the same word is now more commonly used to mean "sustain yourself after the funding is gone, or after resources have been withdrawn"? The notion of living productively without depleting resources for future generations has come to translate, in some situations, into "live productively without sufficient resources." To add insult to injury, if that proves to be impossible for some populations, the individual or neighbourhood or nation is perceived to be a drain on the entire community.

In order to achieve true sustainability we need to distinguish it from the offloading of responsibility onto the backs of exhausted volunteers and overburdened communities. The question "How will

you sustain your efforts after current resources are gone?" can feel like a finger pointing exercise by those who have the power to make resource decisions. This uni-directional "question of sustainability" needs to be changed into an active "dialogue about sustainability" for the concept to again become meaningful. Such dialogue would encourage communities to not only think about how to continue efforts in changed resource situation; it would also support them in holding funders, governments and other resource rich groups accountable for their commitment to the vitality of community activities. Let's face it, resources (including core funding) are critical for community strengthening. The mostly time-limited nature of these resources makes the concept of longevity difficult if only considered by part of the community context. Further, what is unsustainable is the acceptance of a status quo in which some citizens, groups or communities "make it" and some don't. The expectation that it is possible to establish temporary and clear measures to address complex problems (with deep roots in inequitable social conditions) makes communities volatile rather than sustainable.

In our own context, a three-year demonstration project works with four neighbourhoods. Our mandate is to increase the resilience of neighbourhoods and service collaboration to address the root causes of crime: family breakdown, social-economic disparity, lack of appropriate educational opportunities, exposure to criminal behaviour, to name a few. These are huge issues and difficult to address, as manifested by the presence of multiple services at the neighbourhood level: child welfare, corrections, law enforcement, income support, public health and so on. Such mandates cannot be accomplished within a short time frame, against a historical back drop of services working in isolation from one another, and without dialogue about continuation of efforts after the initial funding period at all levels of involvement has concluded.



Does this make it senseless to even engage in pilot type projects? Would it be better to not accept resources for fear of not being able to sustain the momentum? We think not! And certainly if the energy of neighbourhood leaders is anything to go by, they don't think so either.

Sometimes the combination of time-limited resources, informal supports, and grassroots ingenuity can result in brilliant hybrids. Typically, these just begin to bloom when resources cease and unique community contexts (a key strength in sustainability) are forced to fit themselves into pre-defined parameters to seek new supports. One outcome is that community groups end up lurching from one funding source to another thus using a phenomenal amount of their energy in the chase for future resources, rather than to sustain the impact of previous ones. Such is the paradox of sustainability. It has become a cumbersome task burdening community groups and straining their present energies, quite possible at the expense of future efforts. To be sure, some municipalities have come to appreciate the long-term savings in human and financial terms providing ongoing supports to informal supports. But community groups are all too familiar with a sense of abandonment. It is easy to understand, thus, how despite best intentions and with sound approaches, at times, energy dissipates when activities become too much for volunteers or overburdened community workers. At such times, often another seedling in a different place or context might be encouraged to put down shallow roots. But no one seems to own the whole picture.

Our challenge, then, as community workers, is to reclaim the original meaning of sustainability. Sustainability becomes possible when we appreciate how a living system thrives on the complex and yet delicate inter-play of its diverse elements. In a natural setting, disruption at one level of the chain has ramifications at all other levels. In a community setting, we cannot withdraw one form of support without that action having an impact on all other human, social, and environmental elements. This needs to be clear from the onset, and the responsibility for this critical balance needs to be jointly owned, by community and neighbourhood groups, funders, government and wider human services alike.

With great foresight, Judith Maxwell outlined two

alternative scenarios for the 21st century that speak to the need for balance (Presentation to the National Conference for the Community Foundations of Canada, 1996). The first scenario is characterised by the marginalization of youth, minorities, and low skilled workers. In this "polarised society" as social spending decreases, spending on public security increases. Professionals and technical workers are well compensated when compared to other community members. The growing gap leads to a sense of feeling less safe and prompts the middle class to retreat into gated communities. (This tension is strongly present in the debate over tighter security at the cost of civil rights that has been taking place since September 11, 2001.)

By contrast, the "resilient society" is characterised by people who are flexible and can adapt to new labour markets and family structures. Citizens reach out and assume responsibility for themselves, their colleagues, neighbours, and families. Unique forms of collective action strengthen communities. Priority is given to public investment in human and social capital.

If we take Maxwell's definition of resilience and add to it the commitment to live in balance with our natural environment, we will have moved closer to a true notion of a sustainable society. True sustainability requires such philosophical re-orientation in which the boundaries between resources providers and resource users begin to blur. True sustainability begins with the acknowledgement that, in the end, we are all citizens, sharing the same community critically dependent on our ability to live harmoniously, democratically, and responsibly, no matter what our position.

Reflective practitioners, therefore, must constantly ask themselves if their actions support (or undermine) a community's ability to flourish now and in the future. We must ask this question of ourselves as much as we have become accustomed to asking it of others. Sustainability, as a central tenet of quality of life, can only be ensured when communities are resourced adequately to build supportive partnerships and to mobilise meaningful citizen engagement. This must go hand in hand with human services policy changes and a political commitment to invest in a community's ability to become inclusive, vital and harmonious places to live.



New Publications in 2001

ACORD Personal Lifestyle Management Program Feasibility: Final Report. Botschner, J. V., Taylor, A., Watt, J., & Lomotey, J. (2001)

AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area Positive Approaches Program: Final evaluation report. Botschner, J. V. (2001)

A Rent Bank for Waterloo Region: A feasibility study.
Rich Janzen, Helmut Braun, & Laura Guitar (2001)

An assessment of employment needs of consumer/survivors in Wellington-Dufferin Region.
Purnima Sundar, Michelle Moziar, Nash Majstorovic, & Joanna Ochocka (2001)

Creating a climate of safety: School-based social work in Huron and Renfrew Counties.
Rich Janzen, Andrew Taylor, Susan Murtha, & Barbara Powell (2001)

Evaluation report for Hospice of Waterloo Region.
Andrew Taylor & Alice Hutton (2001)

Exploring the future direction of MAPS (Mutual Aid with Psychiatric Survivors) in Wellington and Dufferin Counties.
Purnima Sundar & Joanna Ochocka (2001)

Hate crimes and bias activity in the City of London: Final report and action plan.
Janos Botschner, Purnima Sundar, & Rich Janzen (2001)

Interim evaluation report for "Seventh Inning".
Andrew Taylor & Shannon Fenton (2001)



Making a change together: A resource handbook for promoting access to professions and trades for foreign-trained people in Ontario.
Rich Janzen, Shaheen Azmi, & Asha Chakkalal (2001)
Available for download at www.crehs.on.ca!

Ontario Network for Access to Professions and Trades: Final evaluation report.
Rich Janzen (2001)

Parenting issues of newcomer families in Ontario: Waterloo Region Findings.
Joanna Ochocka, Rich Janzen, Paul Anisef, Kenise Murphy Kilbride, Purnima Sundar, & Christina Fuller (2001)

Provincial Early Years final evaluation report.
Andrew Taylor, Janos Botschner, Nash Majstorovic, Valerie Kenny, Purnima Sundar, & Holly Williamson (2001)

Safe & Sound: Community Profiles.
Andrew Taylor, Joanna Ochocka, Rich Janzen, & Geoff Nelson (2001)

Safe & Sound: The story so far.
Andrew Taylor, Janos Botschner, Rich Janzen, & Geoff Nelson (2001)

The workplace as a determinant of health: A literature review for the Waterloo Region Community Health Department.
Susan Murtha & Andrew Taylor (2001)



Sustainability: Do we really want everything to remain, just as it is, forever? And why do we think money is the prime enabler?

by Jan Lubell

Ask community service providers to talk about the challenge of sustainability, and their first (and sometimes only) words usually have to do with money. From their perspective, developing interventions, operating programs and ensuring outcomes requires funding. Without predictable financial resources, and particularly without extra and continuing increases related to new interventions and programs, the newer service just isn't perceived to be sustainable. Nothing, however, is farther from the truth. No conceptualization is more contradictory to the essence of sustainability as a concept. Sustainability does not start with money!

What is the Role of Finance?

Definitely critical is a core of funds that allows the energy and focus of an organization to be on program delivery, not on a relentless search for funding. We should never underestimate that reliable supports enable excellence in operations. However, we must also be aware that the direction of those supports might want to change over time. Sometimes we need to stop or change what we're doing in favor of a new or improved strategy. Sometimes we have to do a hard cost-benefit analysis and decide not to support exactly what we have now, but to either modify the current strategy with different funding or redirect present resources to new ways of doing things. While money does play a role, the sustainability of an idea or a program is not dependent solely upon finances.

What are the Real Roots of Sustainability?

If it's not only money that drives sustainability, what factors are integral to the concept? At Investing in Children, we work with the premise that sustainability refers to the maintenance and continuation of outcomes and/or exemplary practices and proven strategies. Sustainability is therefore not born of new funding or of program

ideas and specific activities carried out in exactly the same way over time. Rather, sustainability comes from policy and practice, culture change, and process improvements. From our perspective, programs and activities are parts of a larger system; and those who know about systems understand they are never static, but always responding, shifting, and changing. We know that the strategies or activities that make sense now may not necessarily be the best over time, even when the goals and objectives remain the same. This is because the players, the priorities, and the environmental context may require something else.

An Example: Investing in Children

Investing in Children is an organization located in London, Ontario that works to mobilize community resources toward improvements in children's healthy growth and development, learning and well-being. As one of five demonstration projects for the province's Early Years initiative, Investing in Children facilitated the development of a network of neighborhood centers designed to provide expanded opportunities for growth, learning, and development to young children and their families. Using a collaborative, community-development planning model, a range of sectors came together to achieve the above goals.

Community institutions, service providers and the corporate sector "at the top" of our model managed the vision, shared costs and contributions, and brought different forms of expertise and know-how to bear on the finished product. Service recipients (i.e., neighborhood community members) played an integral role in determining the needs and preferences of consumer-users. They provided feedback about service delivery to the former group, who responded with required changes. This ongoing link and loop between the groups, top-down and bottom-up, created continuous



improvements that worked towards effective goal attainment.

Other community groups and organizations were engaged to donate space, custodial services, food and snacks, program materials, administrative supports, and expertise in program design. Volunteers willingly provided assistance in program management tasks such as record keeping, clerical duties, greeting parents and children, preparing snacks, and clean-up. In addition, staffing was partially covered through job creation and student placement experiences.

The major components requiring cash funding were salaries for experienced staff, insurance, and other administrative costs. Clearly, the funds required for these elements is nowhere near what would be required to sustain all the previously described program components. Aside from the financial benefits of covering costs throughout various sectors, this shared-contribution system has further advantages such as increasing community awareness of the issues and leveraging "corporate buy-in" in a way that simply can't be bought through money alone!

In our organization, building community capacity, sustaining a successful modus operandus, and reaching desired objectives/outcomes generally entails:

1. An agreed-upon vision and shared values that encompasses what it is that we are trying to do and what we believe;
2. Exemplary practices that help us to successfully reach our objectives; and
3. Critical evaluation that tells us when and if we've reached our goals.

Strategies for Sustainability

Through our work at Investing in Children, we've found that the strategies that best lead to "sustainability" or the continuation of key elements over time include:

- ◊ **A collaborative/community development model.** The engagement of many players sharing costs is critical for sustainability, and while we don't want an "institutional branch model", we must

recognize that people make decisions and choices based on what they already know. We need to work both from the top-down and the bottom-up for goal attainment. This allows us to extend and expand the range of choices for communities, but still "start where program recipients are" in terms of their needs and preference. Shared contributions. Project support through shared contributions energizes a product where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. An interesting result is that if any one contributor can't continue to give, the whole project will not be in danger of failing. It also recognizes the critical in-kind donations that are at the heart of sustainable programming.

- ◊ **A synergy of elements.** Sustainability also depends on a synergy of program elements, where each activity is necessary and none is sufficient by itself. The result is greater than each or any. A culture shift. In order for programs to be sustained, the service provision infrastructure needs the capacity to assimilate and accommodate the new ways of doing things. A change in service culture is often the unanticipated but positive consequence of new program introduction.
- ◊ **Sustainability is a necessary consideration in any program development.** The community is littered with remembered programs that started with good ideas, but faltered, before their time, for lack of funding. These programs never had a chance to fully play out because development time was too short or an evaluation too narrow in its concept. Alternatively, there are ways to engage the entire community, to seek contributions, and to share the benefits of outcomes that are often not even conceptualized at a new program's outset. In the end, it is the non-traditional ways of thinking and the culture's ability to change and to accommodate that are the supports for sustainability, not individual programs or strategies and clearly not the money alone!



Sustainability and community research

by Andrew Taylor

Most of the people we meet in our work at the Centre are trying, in one way or another, to build stronger, more inclusive communities. Very often, their projects are unusual, innovative, bold, risky and/or ambitious. It's inspirational to be surrounded by such people. When we sit down to talk about the role community research might play in this kind of work, our conversations almost always have something to do with sustainability. Sometimes, people are looking for information that will help them choose the most promising, most sustainable next step for their group. At other times, people are seeking evidence to make sure that the work they are already doing is worthy of continuation. On the other hand, some people come to us frustrated that a funder is forcing them to devote a percentage of their very limited resources to research, when the need of the community is so great.

At the Centre, we believe that program evaluation, needs assessment, and action research can do much more than dispassionately record and interpret the struggle to build a civil society. In the right hands, the techniques and principles of community research are themselves powerful community development tools. In fact, our experience suggests that initiatives that incorporate these elements (e.g., ongoing information gathering and analysis, frequent feedback and dissemination of this information, ongoing critical reflection that includes everyone) are, ultimately, more sustainable.

Sustainability: How Can Community Research Help?

Small community groups are often great breeding grounds for innovation. They are flexible, intimately connected to the issue at hand, and forced by the inevitable lack of resources to be creative. When funders support the cutting-edge work of these groups, they sometimes expect the

group to conduct an evaluation of their work that conclusively demonstrates its long-term value. This is rarely possible. Community-level change is complex, and often takes a slow and unpredictable path. It can happen on many levels simultaneously. While research evidence can inform our approaches in many ways, no single study (even a very expensive, longitudinal study with many different methods) can conclusively prove the value of an intervention of this kind. The small allocations typically set aside by funders for the evaluation of community building projects definitely can't.

What Community Research Can Do:

- ▣ It can "get the word out" about ideas that have potential, and help people decide on the most promising, effective, sustainable approach to a community issue.
- ▣ It can be a way to get more people, and new groups of people, involved in a project.
- ▣ It can help to persuade funders and partners that a particular approach is worth supporting.
- ▣ It can help those involved in a project work more effectively or efficiently.

When Does Community Research Help the Most?

- ▣ When it is tied to other research findings and linked to a commonly understood theoretical framework.
- ▣ When it is driven internally, by those involved with the community in question, and when it is customized to local needs.
- ▣ When the research process (as well as the outcome) is designed to be helpful.



Our active participation: Conferences & Workshops

Program Logic Model Development Workshop:
Government of Ontario Children's Secretariat, Toronto,
February, 2001.

Program Logic Models and Evaluation Planning
Workshop: Let's Grow of Grey and Bruce Counties,
Owen Sound, February, 2001.

Strategic Planning Session for Universal Design project.
Ontario Independent Living Centres. Niagara, March,
2001.

Blended Approach: Utilization Focused Academic and
Community Research Department of Sociology, York
University - Invited Speaker, Toronto, March 2001.

What's it Like to be an Immigrant Parent? Community
forum presentation for the Study of Parenting Issues of
Newcomer Families in Ontario, Kitchener, Ontario,
March 2001.

Child Welfare Agencies and School Boards
Collaborating to Promote Healthy Child Development,
School-Based Social Work Program Conference,
Ottawa, April 2001.

Presentation on Participatory Approaches. National
meeting on Evaluation in Family Resource Programs.
Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs.
Ottawa, May 2001.

Bringing Evaluation Process to Life in Organizations.
Presentation at McMaster Summer Institute on
Gerontology. Hamilton, June 2001.

A critical discourse analysis of the praxis of
participatory action research. Paper presented at the
9th biennial meeting of the International Society for
Theoretical Psychology, Calgary, June 2001.

Longitudinal Evaluation of Consumer/Survivor
Initiatives in Ontario. Annual Conference of Ontario
Peer Support Network, Toronto, June 2001.

Participatory Action Research in Canadian Psychology
II: Conceptual clarification. Paper presented at the
annual meeting of the History and Philosophy Section
of the Canadian Psychological Association, Calgary,
June 2001.

Sharing Power and Knowledge: Professional and
Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Researchers Working
Together in a Participatory Action Research Project.
World Assembly for Mental Health, Vancouver, July
2001.

Shifting A Paradigm in Community Mental Health: A
Community Study of Implementation and Change.
World Assembly for Mental Health, Vancouver, July
2001.

Systemic Change and Foreign Trained Newcomers,
Maytree Foundation Leadership Training Program,
Toronto, August 2001.

Parenting Issues of Newcomer Families in Ontario, 5th
National Metropolis Conference, Ottawa, October 2001.

Immigration Issues: Newcomer parents and
Challenges of Parenting in Canada
Sixth International Metropolis Conference, Rotterdam,
The Netherlands, November 2001.

Presentation on Safe and Sound: Lessons Learned
about Evaluation and Community Development.
Ontario Public Health Association Annual Conference.
Kitchener, November 2001.

Panel member, National Roundtable on Evaluation in
Family Support. Aylmer, November 2001.

Provincial Evaluation of Early Years Demonstration
Projects: Summary of Ottawa Findings. Ottawa,
November 2001.

Community Consultations and Planning Meetings for
Renfrew County Early Years project. Renfrew County,
November 2001.

Presentation at National meeting of Evaluators for
Crime Prevention Projects. National Crime Prevention
Centre, Ottawa, 2001.

Introduction to Service Inventories and Gaps Analysis.
Southwestern Ontario Early Years Coordinators'
Networking Meeting. November, Burlington, 2001.

Introduction to Service Inventories and Gaps Analysis.
Northern Ontario Early Years Coordinators' Networking
Meeting. November, Toronto, 2001.

Introduction to Service Inventories and Gaps Analysis.
Central Ontario Early Years Coordinators' Networking
Meeting. November, Toronto, 2001.



Who we Are: Current Staff, Board, & Volunteers

Core Staff

Joanna Ochocka	Centre Coordinator
Janos Botschner	Senior Researcher
Rich Janzen	Senior Researcher
Andrew Taylor	Senior Researcher
Nash Majstorovich	Centre Researcher
Purnima Sundar	Centre Researcher
Judy Field	Administrative Assistant
Jenny House	Financial Assistant
Amanda Soikie	Administrative and Technical Assistant

Board of Directors

Maria DeBoer	President
Theron Kramer	Secretary
Elba Martell	Vice-President
Marilyn Malton	Treasurer
Lynn Randall	
Marnie Shepherd	

Student Practicums

Megan Joachimedes MA student, University of Guelph	Kristen Roderick MSW student, Wilfrid Laurier Univeristy
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Community Researchers

Robert Chapman	Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Shannon Fenton	Lang's Farm Early Years, Guelph
Christina Fuller	Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Ginette Gendrom	Safe and Sound
Laura Guitar	Safe and Sound & Rent Bank
Nicole Hayes	Early Years
Jean Irish	Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Jonathan Lomotey	Six Nations Organizational Review, Six Nations Prevention
Geoff Nelson	Safe and Sound & Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Karen Orr	Safe and Sound
Kristen Roderick	Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Leah Sagloski	Consumer/Survivor Initiative
Jessie Watt	ACORD, Six Nations Prevention, Six Nations Organizational Review

Volunteers

Karen Lord	Bey Miller
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Above: Staff members of the Centre and their families at our annual summer picnic in August 2001. After a beautiful paddle down the Grand River, everyone enjoyed a delicious pot luck feast at Kiwanis Park. A rousing game of elbow tag and three legged races finished off the fun and frolic filled day!.



In Loving Memory



Helmut Braun
*February 4th, 1958 -
September 24th, 2001*

We will remember you, love

and how one day you forgot to fly...

This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. Being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as I live, it is my privilege - my privilege to do for it whatever I can I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I love, I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me; it is a splendid torch which I've got a hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

George Bernard Shaw

Waterloo Region Self-Help and the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services would like to announce the establishment of **Helmut Braun's Award**, an educational fund that will contribute to the cost of post secondary education for a student pursuing studies in any of the following areas:

- social justice, peace and conflict resolution
- community development
- cross-cultural issues
- community research and social change

The award will be given yearly to student(s) in need of financial assistance. The fund will be administered by the Mennonite Community Foundation of Canada. Cheques should be made payable to "Mennonite Foundation of Canada" with "Helmut Braun's Award" written in the memo line. Please send donations to:

c/o Mike Strathdee
Stewardship Consultant
Mennonite Foundation of Canada
50 Kent Ave.
Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1
tel: 519-745-7821 fax: 519-745-0064
e-mail: mfckit@mennonitecc.on.ca

Donations will also be accepted at the Centre for Research and Waterloo Regional Self Help. For more information please visit Centre web-site: <http://www.crehs.on.ca>

Financial contributions are welcome from everyone.

The Centre for Research and Education in Human Services is an independent, non-profit organization established in 1982. The Centre works with professionals, consumers and other community members to create an understanding of human service policies and practices that affect citizens who have been disadvantaged. The Centre works collaboratively with a wide range of groups and organizations in research, education and planning capacities.

Mission Statement

The Centre for Research and Education in Human Services is committed to social change and the development of communities and human services that are responsive and supportive, especially for people with limited access to power and opportunity. Demonstrating leadership through research, education and community involvement, the Centre stimulates the creation of awareness, policies, and practices that advance equitable participation and integration of all members of our community.

NewsReport

Editor: Purnima Sundar
Layout & Design: Amanda Soikie

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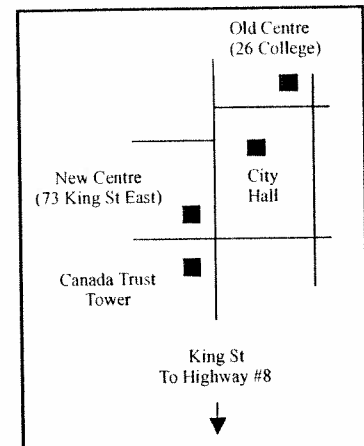
We've moved!

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A Celebration of New Canadian Families!



On Thursday, March 8th, 2001 the Centre hosted "A Celebration of New Canadian Families" in the Rotunda of Kitchener City Hall. This community forum brought together more than twenty local service providers and over 200 community members and new Canadian families for an evening of education and entertainment. While findings from the recently completed "Study on Parenting Issues of Newcomer Families in Ontario" (done in conjunction with the Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement [CERIS]) were presented, children were entertained by balloons, face painting and the wonderful children's entertainer Ronno. The evening was a spectacular success for everyone involved!

