



Annual Report 2016

Success through community engagement.



www.janefinchcentre.org



Partnerships

The Jane/Finch Centre has been a leader in developing and facilitating partnerships across North Toronto since our founding 40 years ago.

The Centre runs on the basis of the strength of our partnerships, which extends across our programs. Partnerships have allowed our programs to reach populations that were not being impacted by the Centre's activities, as well as to be present in neighborhoods that extend beyond the borders of Jane and Finch.

Through partnerships our Early Years Centre has been able to develop Building Healthy Families, focused on supporting families with children with special needs; our Senior's program to offer services in 9

different languages; for The Spot to have a full complement of programming for youth most focused on their needs, including mental health services, art therapy, violence prevention, and employment and training services. The organizations that we partner with both support and enhance the work of our Centre, and are essential to the success of our service delivery model.

Our key partnership is with our residents. Resident voice is a key consideration in all management, leadership and decision-making processes of the Centre, as well as its organizational structure. Across our programs we have Resident Advisory Committees/Groups.

Build confidence



Social Justice

Through monthly advisory meetings residents are provided with skill-building opportunities to support leadership capacity. We provide staff and financial support to resident-led and issue-specific groups and through that support build resident capacity to respond to issues affecting their lives and their community. And we have, for many years, acted as a trustee for unincorporated local resident groups. These groups contribute to the vibrancy of the Jane and Finch communities, leading residents to increase their engagement and commitment to strengthening their neighborhood assets.

JANE FINCH
CENTRE
Community Matters
40th
Anniversary

Inspire



Positive Change

Strategic Directions

Our Vision will inspire and guide us towards the future that we seek to create with our communities. We have identified three strategic directions to support the resilience of our organization and positive change in the community:

1. Strengthening the capacity of our community to contribute to systemic social change
2. Reducing poverty and its effect on physical and mental health in our community, with an emphasis on youth, seniors and families
3. Enhancing the practices of our organization

All three strategic directions contribute to our mandate of reducing poverty and the impacts of poverty for residents in Northwest Toronto. They will enable JFC to continue to build on its strengths and be responsive to the needs and opportunities of our residents, community and institutional partners, funders, and other key stakeholders.





Who We Are

The Jane/Finch Centre is a multi-service, community-based organization with a strong focus on poverty reduction through resident engagement, capacity building and anti-oppression. We have a long history of innovation and response to community needs and priorities.

For over 40 years, the organization has been strategically building the health and well-being of Jane and Finch in collaboration with residents, community leaders, community groups, organizations and partners from within the local community and beyond. With a resident-led Board of Directors, the Centre has always been a passionate and strategic organization which has won numerous best practice awards.

In 2015 we:

- Served over 14,000 individuals
- Worked with 178 volunteers, donating 6,702 hours
- Delivered 2,126 workshops
- Distributed 32,948 publications
- Collaborated with over 90 partner agencies



Our History

The Centre was incorporated in 1976 through resident involvement. After acquiring charitable status we started to receive funding in the 1970s.



We became a United Way Toronto member in 1980 and expanded our services to include serving newcomers. The Centre had active participation and involvements with local groups and city-wide coalitions and networks. We developed Leaders-In-Training workshops that supported residents in advocating for their community. We also worked with York University and other partners in establishing a Bridging Course for Women to help them transition into university studies.

In the 1990s, we developed a new mission statement and expanded our mandate to include youth. We added anti-racism programs, community speak-outs, and alcohol and drug prevention programs to our services. We also saw our ability to provide good jobs grow. During this time, we became the first community-based organization in Jane/Finch to establish an extended benefits plan, which included RRSP contributions. This strengthened



our infrastructure and encouraged other organizations to follow suit. With our organization growing, we were able to secure two more units at our main office.

In the 2000s we opened our Early Years Centre, The Spot youth hub, launched Women Moving Forward and received funding from the United Way for Action for Neighborhood Change. During this time, we created a spectacular mural on the side of our offices at 4400 Jane Street that has become an identifiable fixture of the community. We put an emphasis on youth programs and enhanced our services for children 0 – 6 years old and we surveyed 400 residents to establish the priorities for the ANC. And as our programs grew, we also grew and expanded our presence to two more sites in the community.

In this last decade, we added Green Change, an environmental sustainability program, Settlement Services, a Financial Empowerment and Problem-Solving (FEPS) program and received funding to expand our Seniors program to serve 350 seniors. We expanded our services to two more sites, so that we are now offering programs out of 6 locations within the Jane/Finch community. And in 2016, we celebrated 40 years of service in the community and launched a new website, logo and branding that brings the six sites together in the promotion of our programs and services.



Collaboration

Community Engagement



Our Vision is a healthy Jane Finch community - strong, inclusive, socially and politically active through diversity, opportunity and participation.

Community Development

The Community Development Action Team believes in growing and promoting the resourcefulness and resiliency of the people who make up the communities of Jane and Finch.

Through various activities and services, residents are supported to develop skills and capacity, to act as advocates for their families and community, and take on the leadership of creating the change necessary to strengthen their neighbourhoods.

We work across the neighborhoods of Jane and Finch to support community-based, community-led initiatives, with a focus on addressing issues related to social and economic justice. The team supports a variety of initiatives, projects and services which are driven and led by resident engagement. These initiatives are what the community knows to be needed and are supported and implemented with the community members as the designers and leaders of each activity.

“With the encouragement and support of the CD team, I developed the ability and confidence to advocate for increased play spaces in our community. Over the last year I worked on a bid with Parks and Recreation and organized community consultations that resulted in a playground being built this summer”



Financial Empowerment and Problem Solving (FEPS)

Financial empowerment is an approach to poverty reduction that focuses on improving the financial security of low-income people.

Our Financial Empowerment and Problem-Solving program works with individuals who are living on low-incomes so they gain increased understanding and control of their finances and access benefits that can boost their incomes.

FEPS provides information and solutions to complex financial challenges for people in immediate financial difficulty; it also supports them to make informed decisions and appropriate longer-term plans to deal with debt and start saving.

FEPS also provides information, workshops and assistance to other non-profit community organizations, plays a role in identifying financial policy issues that adversely affect individuals living on low incomes, and aims to facilitate positive change in these policies and regulations by developing new tools and policy alternatives, and through advocacy.



Youth

The Spot, Where YOU(th) Wanna Be, is located in the Yorkgate Mall and offers programming for youth between the ages of 13–29 years of age.

The Spot is a safe and accessible space created to support vulnerable youth to optimize their personal, social, and vocational competency in order to achieve his or her full potential, ultimately reducing the effects of poverty. The focus of The Spot's work is youth-centered and designed to promote the overall health of youth by building on their strengths. Our youth programs are committed to increasing and building the leadership skills of youth. We support youth to realize and reach for opportunity.

Services and opportunities for youth include:

- Employment training, support, and opportunities
- Workshops
- Academic support
- Education and skill development
- Settlement support for newcomers to Canada
- Advocacy and social justice in the Jane and Finch community
- Community engagement
- Social, Recreational and physical activities
- Access to an effective and efficient network of community support services

The Spot works with partnering organizations to deliver even more programs to youth by sharing space, providing support, and collaborating on programs together.

“After my mom told me that we couldn’t live together, I never thought I would be able to find a place and survive on my own. Then, I went to the Spot and spoke with a worker at The Spot. He told me that he understands my situation and that there is help for me. He made many calls and found me a place to live and help me get food right away and for down the road. I felt totally supported and grateful that there was somewhere I could go. It was my mans dem that told me they got help from The Spot in the past. I am grateful that The Spot is around.”



Green Change

Green Change is a resident capacity-building program that connects people, place and nature to realize new possibilities for more equitable and sustainable communities.

We work with residents, community partners, and city-wide organizations on a wide range of environmental, urban planning, food security and social justice issues affecting the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

Our approach is driven by four core values: Roots, Spark, Fairness, and Transformation.

Roots – Our programs are grounded in the community and based on real needs and aspirations.

Spark – We are committed to bringing people from different backgrounds and sectors together to think creatively about a problem. We show different ways to make your ideas a reality.

Fairness – We engage residents and partners in designing and leading our programs to build ownership and create more equitable and sustainable solutions.

Transformation – We believe that healthier spaces and people are only possible when everyone has an active role in shaping their physical environment.

Helping Youth Reach Employment

Since 2012, the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre has offered employment support services and resources to youth who face multiple barriers. HYRE (Helping Youth Reach Employment) was created from on-going discussions with youth having difficulties attaining employment.

HYRE offers one-to-one and group employment and skills counselling four days a week, during and after traditional business hours, including Saturdays.

Services include monthly employment related workshops and trainings that focus on soft skills such as, interpersonal communications, workplace culture and etiquette, and conflict resolution, as well as formal certification programs. One-to-one services support include job searching, resume building, mock interviews, and ensuring youth have the proper equipment to begin work.

With these activities, participants develop the key skills to support their employability. We help more youth feel comfortable, knowledgeable, and prepared to enter the workforce. Through HYRE, youth develop the personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, on the job performance and career prospects.





Community Resource Centre

The Community Resource Centre is the first point of entry to the Jane/Finch Centre.

We are proud to serve the Jane Finch community in all its diversity in a friendly, courteous and professional way. We keep our fingers on the pulse of the community, ensuring that we are able to advocate for and connect residents with the social services they need.

The Community Resource Centre works closely with the community as partners in their own development. We promote excellence in service delivery across programs and are committed to supporting a healthy and safe community where residents can comfortably live, learn and grow. Our vision is a community where every resident has the opportunity to succeed.

“The CRC staff have shown me, in so many ways, that they genuinely care about my wellbeing.”

We are proud to offer the following services:

- Information on community resources
- Community job, health and resource boards
- Assistance with filling out forms
- Interpretation and understanding of government correspondence
- Photocopying, printing and faxing services for a nominal fee
- Intake and referrals
- Advocacy
- Tax filing
- Volunteer Engagement
- Computer and Internet access



Women Moving Forward

Women Moving Forward (WMF) is a program that transitions women and their families from economic dependency to financial independence.

While some programs focus on employment, some focus on parenting and some focus on life skills, WMF offers women the opportunity to experience all three simultaneously, each building on and enhancing the others. Using this holistic approach to learning and making life changes, WMF is structured to provide women with not only with the tools and skills they need, but also the time and support necessary to master each tool and skill.

After graduating from the program, WMF continues to offer support to women and their families as they pursue their career goals. This support includes helping them to overcome new barriers they may face, the college and university application process or personal issues they may encounter. This support is available to women as long as they need it on their journey, both from program staff but also from fellow program alumni.



Early Years Centre

Ontario Early Years Centres are places where parents, grandparents, caregivers, and children six years of age and younger play and learn together.

At the Ontario Early Years Centres, parents and caregivers can:

- Take part with their children in a range of programs and activities
- Get answers to questions about successful parenting
- Get information about programs and services that are available for young children
- Talk to early years professionals as well as with other parents and caregivers in the community
- Participate in training to enhance parenting skills, build resiliency and reduce factors that put families at risk

Our Early Years Centre provides opportunities that can meet the needs of all parents with young children. We also offer programs and services to support children with special needs.

"I come from far away to attend this program because I feel comfortable here. When my child had a problem, no one was willing to help me, but when I came here, I was welcomed and got the help my child needed."



Community Mental Health

Our community mental health program, **Getting in Touch (GIT)**, is committed to working with community partners in order to raise awareness about mental health issues and co-ordinate social/recreational programs for individuals requiring mental health support.

We work with community partners to:

- Reduce the incidence of mental health related hospitalizations in Northwest Toronto
- Increase participant's social interaction and integration into the community.
- Reduce barriers to accessing mental health services caused by class, race, gender, language, sexual orientation and/or physical/mental health.
- Increase opportunities for participant knowledge and referral to other appropriate community resources.
- Access and contribute to a safe, supportive and creative environment in which to enhance participant capacities in dealing with life issues.



Settlement

Our settlement program supports the successful integration of new immigrant youth and families through cultural, educational, economic, social, and political engagement.

We aim to support the healthy integration of newcomers by working closely with participants, family supports, community organizations and government agencies. Our program is developed from a client-centered approach offering ongoing services to help with transitional challenges. Our services includes facilitating orientation and information workshops; social and recreational activities; one-on-one solution focused settlement counselling; and support services.

“Thank you so much for your support and assistance as you have guided me along the way for the past five years. I couldn’t have made it without the support and services you offered.”



Seniors

Our Seniors' program is a mobile adult day service for seniors from the Asian, South Asian, Spanish, Caribbean and East African communities to live independently in the community for as long as possible.

The program provides seniors with a gateway to accessing appropriate health care information and services through linkages with local health care providers in a multilingual setting. Seniors are encouraged to engage in the development of the programs to ensure that the services provided are relevant and sensitive to the needs of the participants.

JANE FINCH CENTRE

Community Matters

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