

It's been some time since we wrote to our friends about the important work we are doing - work you and others have made possible through your generous support. We want to keep you updated on the many new developments that are strengthening our ability to put Canadian children - all children - on the best possible footing for success now and throughout their lives.



Message from Peter Szatmari, Acting Director

There is no greater insight into the future than recognizing when we save our children we save ourselves. - Margaret Mead

A new year is upon us and, like all new years, it brings a sense of hope and promise in the future. Every year at this time, I think of Margaret Mead, the brilliant American anthropologist who did so much to change our views of the world and the people who inhabit it.

Margaret had a profound belief in the human capacity to change. It was she who once said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."



When I think of those words I think of the small group of "thoughtful, committed" professionals who came together more than 20 years ago because they shared a deep concern for the well-being of young people.

They didn't plan on creating a formal centre for child studies. They simply saw that there were large numbers of kids who were in trouble and needed help. And so they set out to level the playing field by identifying the factors that put children at risk and working to develop effective programs of intervention and prevention.

Have they changed the world? You bet! Through their efforts we learned that one in five children has a serious mental health problem; that childhood behavioural problems, if left untreated, can lead to school dropout, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, depression and anxiety, even suicide. Armed with this knowledge, we are beginning to put in place programs that are helping to improve the opportunities for these children to lead healthy, happy, productive lives - programs that reduce angry and aggressive behaviour in children, that improve the self-esteem and parenting skills of single mothers, or that help diagnose kids with autism earlier.

In this newsletter, you will read about two new research projects that have just received major funding, and a new research chair we are creating in memory of Dan Offord, the man who led that thoughtful and committed group of professionals that today is the Offord Centre for Child Studies. This will be our first year without Dan, and his gentle heart and the warmth of his spirit are very much missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, along with our promise to continue his important work on behalf of children everywhere.

Early Years Centre Honours Dan Offord

Honours and accolades continue to pour in for Dr. David (Dan) Offord, renowned child psychiatrist and founding director of the Offord Centre for Child Studies who died last year.

The latest is the dedication in Dr. Offord's memory of a new children's activity room at the Ontario Early Years Centre in Waterdown. The Centre, serving families in Dundas, Ancaster and Flamborough, provides parents of young children with information on early child development programs, services,

parenting skills and children's literacy. Marni Flaherty, CEO of Today's Family, which operates the centre, said Dr. Offord has left a huge legacy. "We will miss him. He was a tremendous leader and advocate for all children and families."



Golfers unite to support children at risk

2004 was a great year for golfers, and a great year for the Offord Centre for Child Studies, thanks to two outstanding golf events that raised more than \$110,000 for research into the needs of troubled children.

On July 7th, the Hamilton Regional office of Investors Group Financial Services held its 4th Annual Charity Golf Classic at Copetown Woods Golf Club, donating all proceeds to the Offord Centre. Close to \$14,000 was raised through donations, corporate sponsorships, auction and raffle items.

Next came the Centre's annual Chip-in-Fore Children Golf-A-Thon, an all-day extravaganza held September 13th at Tyandaga Golf and Country Club in Burlington.

With sunny weather and Sunni Genesco of K-Lite FM on hand as Honourary Chair and Emcee, our 22 enthusiastic golfers were spurred to feats of endurance and flashes of brilliance as they fought to make 100 holes in a single day. They ended up raising close to \$100,000, putting total contributions from the fundraiser, now in its eighth year, to just over \$1 million!

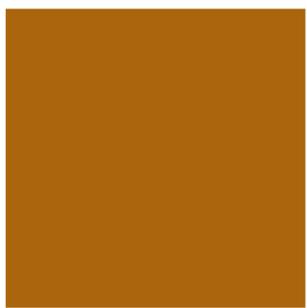
Special thanks to our sponsors Dennis Nixon and RBC Financial Services, to our many friends and partners in the community who provided prizes, and to all the volunteers who helped out that day.

"Both tournaments show what can be achieved when you get a group of golfers together who share a passionate commitment to the welfare of children," said Dr. Peter Szatmari, Acting Director of the Centre. "It was a tremendous effort on the part of everyone involved, and we are deeply grateful."

This year's Chip-in-Fore Children Golf-A-Thon will take place September 12, so mark your calendars now!



Chedoke Site
 Patterson Building
 1200 Main Street West
 Hamilton, Ontario
 Canada L8N 3Z5
 T 905-521-2100
 F 905-574-6665
 1-888-541-KIDS
 www.offordcentre.com



Dan Offord Research Chair in Child Studies

Dan Offord's death in April of last year stunned friends and colleagues around the world. The founding director of the Offord Centre for Child Studies was an outstanding scholar, a devoted clinician and a passionate advocate of children and youth whose life and work had a huge impact on the field of child development and child psychiatry.

The Offord Centre has decided to honour those contributions by creating a Research Chair in Child Studies in Dan's name. Money raised for this Chair will support the work of an internationally acclaimed scientist who will conduct leading research in children's health consistent with Dan's philosophy of leveling the playing field for all children.

Raising the \$2 million or more needed to create the Chair is the Centre's number one fundraising priority, said Acting Director Peter Szatmari.

"This Chair will build upon Dan's legacy by making it possible for us to attract and retain more scientists like him, people who are committed to finding the answers that will ensure every child gets an equal chance at living life to the fullest."

Donations of any amount will be accepted. The monies raised will then be invested, and the interest earned will be used to fund the salary and activities of the chairholder, who will be chosen for a five-year term. This will ensure that the position continues to reap benefits for the Centre – and for children – for many generations to come.

Growing up healthy and happy:

New research aims to improve kids' emotional and social development

More than \$4.1 million in funding has been awarded over the next five years for two Offord Centre studies designed to improve the emotional well-being and social functioning of two types of children at risk – children from low-income and/or single-parent families, and children with autism.

Peter Szatmari, Acting Director of the Centre and a leading expert in the study of autism and pervasive developmental disorders, will receive \$2.1 million for a study of children with autism that will focus on the critical transition between diagnosis and entry into school. The goal is to gain a better understanding of the factors that influence social competence, behaviour, communication, adaptive functioning and family well-being so that appropriate interventions can be developed

Michael Boyle, an expert on the social determinants of child health, will receive just over \$2 million to lead a study with Jennifer Jenkins of the University of Toronto examining how neighbourhood and family affect a child's development. In particular, the study will look at how children from different at-risk groups (for example, low-income and single-parent families) can be affected.

The grants were awarded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) as part of a program to fuel new research that will improve the developmental outcomes of Canadian infants, children and adolescents. Only three such grants were funded across Canada and the Offord Centre received two of them!

Partners for Promising Futures

The Offord Centre for Child Studies is pleased to launch *Partners for Promising Futures*.

The individuals and organizations listed below have given or pledged to give annual donations in excess of \$1,000 for five-years. We thank these donors for their leadership and commitment in helping ensure that the mission and vision of the Offord Centre for Child Studies is secured and that the Centre will continue to grow and prosper.

BUILDING DREAMS

(\$ 1,000 per year for 5 years)

- Dr. and Mrs. Basmajian
- Marion Dewar
- The late Dr. Dan Offord
- Senator Landon Pearson
- Jean and Arthur Pigott
- Whip's Carpentry

CHANGING LIVES

(\$ 5,000 per year for 5 years)

- George Weston Limited

The support of these generous donors will help the Offord Centre for Child Studies achieve our dream of creating a better world for the next generation.

We gratefully acknowledge all of our donors who have given so generously in the past. Please contact our office if you wish to join *Partners for Promising Futures* or if you believe that your name has been omitted from this list in error.

"At the Offord Centre, we believe – as our founding director Dan Offord did – that every person is part of the solution, every person has a role to play in helping our children grow into healthy and happy adults."

Peter Szatmari, MD
 Acting Director, Offord Centre for Child Studies

We want to build Promising Futures for all kids!

JOIN US for...

"An Introduction to the Offord Centre"

This is a one-hour information session for people like yourself, parents, care-givers, teachers etc. to come and visit the Offord Centre for Child Studies, meet our great staff team, learn more about what we do and share in our vision to provide a promising future for all children.

UPCOMING DATES:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| March 10, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |
| April 8, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |
| April 19, 2005 | 4:00 - 5:00 pm |
| May 3, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |
| May 31, 2005 | 4:00 - 5:00 pm |
| June 10, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |
| June 24, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |
| July 8, 2005 | 8:30 - 9:30 am |

RSVP to Heather: 905-521-2100 ext. 44844