



## jake's story

Jake came to the shelter at 17 years of age. Originally from Jamaica, he and his father were sponsored to come to Canada a couple of years before and lived with his father's partner. Jake started school full time and also found a part time job.

After a while his father started to change, they argued all the time, and then moved when his father's relationship ended. His dad often threatened to kick him out if he did not start paying rent. Jake was only working part time so offered to pay \$150 a month, but his father said he needed to pay at least \$400.

“

After much determination  
and motivation to succeed  
Jake was able to  
secure his own place.

”

Living with his dad became very stressful; there was never enough food to eat nor money for bus tickets to school. His school counsellor started to provide him with lunch vouchers and bus tickets.

When he came home one day, he found all his belongings on the front porch and was not allowed back in his home. His school referred him to Our Place Peel.

While staying at the shelter Jake continued to go to work and school. The youth counsellors at the shelter supported him in creating a case plan to help him get on his feet. He was able to apply for Ontario Works and we helped him to create two plans as to what to do next.

Jake decided that he wanted to move out on his own, but just in case he would apply for admission to Peel Youth Village as a back up plan. After much determination and motivation to succeed Jake was able to secure his own place.

Our Place Peel provided him with a care package of personal care items, and a phone number to our Outreach Worker who would continue to support him while he is in his own place. Since then we have continued to maintain contact and have been able to track his progress.

Recently, we received news that at his co-op placement he has been offered a paid apprenticeship due to the fact he is doing so well. In September he will be attending a local college for Culinary Arts. We are so proud of Jake and his accomplishments!

# strategic plan review

This past winter, our Place Peel's Board of Directors initiated a review of the organization's Strategic Plan to provide direction in preparation for developing an Operational and Financial Plan for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

With the support of a Strengthening Organizational Effectiveness grant from the United Way of Peel Region, the Our Place Peel Board and Staff Leadership Team worked with a consultant to facilitate the strategic planning to redefine its Vision, Mission, Values & Strategic Direction, as follows:

## **Vision:**

All youth in the Region of Peel who are at risk of homelessness will have access to a safe shelter and appropriate supports.

## **Mission:**

Our Place Peel is committed to providing shelter, support and hope to youth aged 16-21 in the Region of Peel who are at risk of homelessness.

## **Values:**

Compassion  
Mutual respect, dignity & understanding  
Empowerment & self-reliance  
Community partnerships  
Equality & diversity  
Honesty & integrity  
Health & safety  
Privacy & confidentiality  
Access to basic necessities of life for all

## **Strategic Directions:**

1. Provide safe shelter, interventions, support, and guidance to youth aged 16-21 who are at risk of homelessness in the Region of Peel, in a respectful setting, with the goals of providing hope and increasing self-reliance.
2. Establish relationships with community funders, organizations and other agencies, together with internal resources, that will provide an ongoing assessment regarding the needs of youth in the Region of Peel and create a framework for informed decision-making.
3. Engage in and create awareness with agencies, schools and community organizations about the shelter, support and hope provided by Our Place Peel.
4. Maintain a sustainable funding model.
5. Make Our Place Peel an organization that values and recognizes the contribution of each employee, volunteer and service provider.

# new directors

Welcome to three new Directors who joined the Our Place Peel Board after the 2008-2009 Annual General Meeting: David Prosser, Mert Guler and Alan Nulle.

# save the date

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 21, 2010 starting at 6:30 pm at the Logos Christian Family Church located at 3535 Dixie Road.

# funding grant

We are proud to announce that Our Place Peel received a funding grant of \$37,000 to undertake an assessment of the current emergency youth shelter's space design. We thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their support of our request to hire Hildtich Architect to make a comprehensive assessment of our existing shelter for proper developmental planning to support a possible enhancement of services to accommodate youth ages 16-21 in need of transitional beds.



# tara

I, Tara,  
Am hunkered down in a dingy doorway,  
Lost, alone and scared,  
Spiked hair, tattoos and piercings  
Belie my sixteen years.  
The child within me growing  
chokes defiance, replacing it with fears.

I fled from a home of anger and hate  
And unwanted advances I could not tolerate.  
But now without knowing what to do, I am  
Cold and hungry with nowhere left to turn,  
On Christmas Eve in the city  
I long for warmth, food and some kind friend.

Winter-clad strangers pass by as off to parties we go,  
Heads filled with plans we will not forego,  
Give not a thought for the girl and her invisible plight.  
While folk carrying gaily-wrapped parcels  
Or bottles from our local liquor store  
rush home to hot meals, our loved ones and Christmas décor.  
Crouched in the doorway, my knapsack by my side,  
I hope for the death that will surely come,  
'til a voice breaks my grim reverie.  
A pair of shiny boots she sees, a uniform she fears,  
But a hand reaches out to help banish away tears.

He takes her to a place of refuge and cheer,  
Called Our Place Peel for youth such as her.  
There I find safety and have nothing to fear.  
Welcomed by staff at Our Place Peel,  
Tara finds the comfort she craves and skills to employ,  
While the counsel she receives helps to reveal  
Her strengths and more wisdom in the choices she makes.

Friendships develop with youth and counsellors too  
I now find a family such as I never knew.  
Her pregnancy cared for, her schooling too,  
Tara's future looks brighter at Our Place Peel,  
Thanks to the staff and the patience that will heal.  
And so the harp through Tara's hall still plays.

*Nancy Erb Kee wrote this for the Festive Songs & Stories event held on November 28th at Christ Church Anglican in Brampton in support of Our Place Peel. Thank you Nancy!*

# thank you pratt & whitney!



On Wednesday, April 14th, a group of employees from Pratt & Whitney came to the Emergency Youth Shelter in Mississauga to do some painting and facility improvements as part of its Volunteer Team Program. Thank you Pratt & Whitney for all your hard work on this project!

## upcoming fundraising event in august

We are excited to announce that BDO Canada LLP will be hosting a bowling tournament to fundraise support for Our Place Peel. BDO is Canada's sixth largest accounting and advisory firm with 95 offices and over 1200 advisors nationwide. Their team of professionals provides clients with a full range of assurance and accounting, tax and advisory services, supported by local accessibility and hands-on approach to individual client needs. They work directly with clients to build successful businesses. How? By being a national accounting services and advisory firm that offers a breadth of expertise, innovative thinking, and valuable insight to every client who walks through their doors.

The bowling event will take place on Thursday, August 19, 2010 at Classic Bowl in Mississauga. If you would like to participate as a sponsor or a bowler please feel free to contact either Frances Napoli (905-272-7837 or [fnapoli@bdo.ca](mailto:fnapoli@bdo.ca)) or Laura Secli (905-272-6236 or [lsecli@bdo.ca](mailto:lsecli@bdo.ca)). Register online today at [www.bdo.ca/about/events](http://www.bdo.ca/about/events). Thank you BDO for your generosity, and support as we care for the youth in the Region of Peel.

**CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS AND ADVISORS**

905 270 7700 [www.bdo.ca](http://www.bdo.ca)



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## ashley & gursheel's story

Ashley Coulson and Gursheel Dhami are two students who go to Kindree Public School in Mississauga. They were given an assignment by their teachers, Mr. Bryan Woods and Ms. Avryl McKoy, where they were required to take out the "main idea" of a given story. The story involved a girl that was helping a child who was homeless. This story gave an idea to both Gursheel and Ashley; that they should somehow help those who are most in need of a home.



They decided that they were going to buy a few cookies and make a few cookies themselves. They had about 40 cookies and sold each for \$2. "Me and my friend who are doing this were just thinking about how lucky we are to have all this stuff and these homeless people have nothing. So we decided to help by selling the cookies." They then decided to go to their other teacher, Ms. Karen Lynch, and told her their idea. She later suggested that they donate their earnings to Our Place Peel. It took the girls only 10 days to sell all 40 cookies and at the end of the day they earned more than they expected \$94 for Our Place Peel.

Thank you Ashley and Gursheel!

# residential program changes & shelter enhancements

In spring 2010, Our Place Peel's Board of Directors made the difficult decision to close the residential program in Brampton effective June 30, 2010. This program started in 1985 as part of a Futures initiative by the Ministry of Education to provide residential housing for college students who were seeking employment. It was designed to accommodate up to six youth (aged 16-21) living together for up to one year in a rental house that is staffed 24/7.

Over the past few years the program has struggled to cover its operating costs and its occupancy has not been at full capacity, suggesting that the community need for this type of residential programming may be declining. Replacing these six residential beds will be six new transitional beds as part of an enhancement project for the emergency shelter located in Mississauga.

This project is being funded by a Homelessness Partnership Strategy grant from the Region of Peel and requires renovations to the lower level of the shelter facility that will start this fall. These transitional beds will enable the shelter to accommodate homeless youth who need to stay longer and require more programming supports than the three week period currently offered. These beds would be used by youth requiring a stay of approximately one to three months, who most likely will come from the emergency shelter population. This helps to free up more shelter beds to meet emergency accommodation needs and reduces the number of youth that are turned away due to lack of beds. Currently, we turn away one or more youth per day each month.

The Board wishes to thank all the residential program staff and volunteers who have dedicated themselves to providing a comfortable, caring and home like environment for so many youth over the past 25 years. Special thanks to all the donors, supporters and funders who have contributed to its operation during this time. In particular, the support of the Ministry of Community Social Services – Ministry of Children & Youth Services, Central West Region, and its dedicated staff team is greatly appreciated.

## congratulations

Winners of the Raffle Draw (License #M591854) held during our Bowling Tournament on March 1, 2009 are as follows:

- **Janice Lepiten**  
Winner of the one night stay at the Delta Toronto (Value: \$229)
- **Wilma Upshall**  
Winner of the Maple Leaf Hockey Tickets (Value: \$178)
- **Andrew Swanson**  
Winner of the Rosewater Supper Gift Certificate (Value: \$50)

A very special thank you to the following funders



✂ Detach and mail or fax fully completed form back to Our Place Peel. Thank you for your support! ✂

## yes, i want to support our place peel with a gift

Please accept my **single donation** to Our Place Peel in the amount of:  \$250  \$100  \$75  \$50  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card for this amount accordingly or enclosed is my cheque/money order payable to **Our Place Peel**.

**OR**

Please accept my **monthly donation** to Our Place Peel in the amount of:  \$40  \$25  \$15  \$10  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card or withdraw from my bank account (enclosed is a voided cheque) the above indicated amount on the **15th** day of each month.

VISA  MasterCard  Cheque/Money Order Enclosed

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



- Please contact me on funding opportunities and upcoming events.
- I would like to remain anonymous when Our Place Peel publicly acknowledges its donors.

**guarantee:** You can change or cancel your contribution at any time simply by contacting us by mail, telephone or fax.

**charitable registration number:** 119074136RR0001

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