

Community Connections:



As we embark on preparations for our 75th anniversary, just around the corner from us, the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank has kicked off their 30th anniversary celebrations. Did you know that the Food Bank's Executive Director, Pat Singleton has also been a member of our Board of Directors for the past 4 years? Thank you to Pat for her contribution to this edition that highlights our incredible partnership and her personal dedication to the agency.

Q: As the ED of the Cambridge Self-Help Food bank you are extremely busy and yet you have made time to be a member of our board of directors. What motivated you to join the board of FCC and what is it about the agency that keeps you committed despite all of your other responsibilities?

P: I believe in the work that Family Counselling Centre does not just today, but a number of years ago when I was experiencing some stress and tension in my life I was a client for a number of months. I knew that the help I received was sound, thoughtful and that I could trust that the counsellor I met with would keep confidential not only the issue I brought to counselling but that I, in fact, was a client. I continue to believe in the valuable work that FCC does and I have absolutely no problem with sharing my story and encouraging people to seek counselling.

I am grateful that FCC has a sliding fee scale making counselling very affordable for everyone.

As a Member of the Board of Directors, I along with the Executive Director, Chair of the Board and Board Members provide leadership and guidance for the strategic direction of the organization and I value being able to contribute to our fundraising initiatives.

Q: How long has the Food Bank been partnering with us and what do you feel are the common values that have led to a growing partnership between our two organizations?

P: I believe that we have been working together for at least 15 – 18 years now. I believe our organizations share a continued belief in people and that everyone has something to



Photo credit, David Bebee,
The Record, March 6, 2015

We are thrilled to be this year's joint recipients with the Food Bank for the Mayor's Night at the Movies in support of our work with children. Save the Date: Mon Sept 21, 2015.

contribute. Our hope is that as we work together, often with shared clients, that we would walk alongside – not from a position of “telling people how to live”. We also believe, like FCC, that confidentiality is key!

Q: What are some of the programs or joint initiatives with FCC that you are most proud of or grateful for?

P: Most certainly the onsite Counselling piece through Family Outreach is a collaborative that we believe works well for our families.

The Art Therapy for children-some of the children who we refer to this program have had significant losses or distress and this group is so helpful not only for the children but also for their families.

As a Member of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, I am grateful that we have an Employee Assistance Program in which FCC provides confidential counselling to our Staff. Most of us at some time in our life find we may be dealing with relationship issues, challenges with family life and a number of other stressors that can benefit from a supportive ear and helpful interventions.

We have also called on FCC to attend staff meetings and explore with our Staff anything from experiencing stresses at Christmas to how to deal with the loss of a staff person or a family member. I would really like to encourage the community to think of FCC when they have any number of issues such as we have dealt with and call them to connect with staff.

Q: With so many non-profits in the region all competing for limited resources, what do you see as FCC's unique contributions to the community and reasons for community involvement whether through donations or volunteer roles?

The Walk-In Counselling Services offered by FCC is a great asset to our community. As an organization that refers people to FCC, it is wonderful to know people will receive help without being put on a waiting list.

The Non-Violent Choices programs that are offered provide important cycle support and education to those who have experienced violence in their lives.

Neighbourhood counselling and outreach, in particular the Ayr Hub is a vital part of the lives of the families in Ayr & North Dumfries. They can access counselling services, employee assistance and community services and referrals.

Q: What do you see as some of our biggest barriers?

P: I think it is hard (not impossible) to seek donations for counselling services. We cannot really "see" what counselling looks like. Those of us who have used your services know the inward changes we have experienced and made and often co-workers, friends and families can see the change as well.

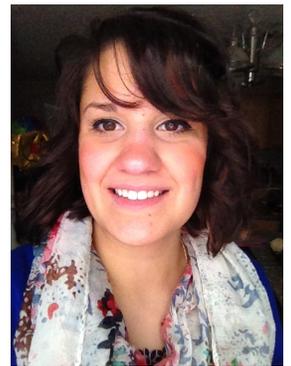
Profiles of Our People

Bina Moore, Neighbourhood Clinician and Agency Therapist

My journey at FCC began in 2010 as a Masters of Social Work intern. I knew from that point on this agency was the right place for me to begin my career. Community collaboration has defined my practice, working closely with the neighbourhood staff and other community partners.

Last year, Family Counselling Centre of Cambridge & North Dumfries received the "Bridge Builder Award" for our counselling collaboration with Greenway-Chaplin Community Association, Kinbridge Community Association and the United Way. It is a great honour to be a part of this neighbourhood collaboration! My experience stationed at Greenway- Chaplin Community Centre for the past 3 1/2 years, is that the neighbourhood centre acts as a "hub" and place of connection for those located within its catchment area. Local residents are empowered and given hope through a range of services.

As a neighbourhood clinician, beyond providing counselling, I have had the opportunity to work alongside community programming, local shelters, court support advocates, elementary & secondary schools, hospitals, and doctors' offices, ultimately creating a circle of support, providing advocacy and a voice for my clients. Women who have experienced abuse may struggle with navigating community resources on their own. Individuals, especially children and youth thrive when all the key players are able to work together. Over the past year, I voluntarily participated in the youth Drop In at Christopher Champlain, alongside the Kinbridge Youth Coordinator, Rufus John. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with youth and provide emotional support when needed.



Profiling Our Programs

We believe in accessible, affordable opportunities for community members to receive the help they need to transform their lives. With 6 neighbourhood locations and a satellite office in Ayr, we are committed to ensuring transportation and cost are not barriers for local residents to access counselling.

Each neighbourhood centre provides a safe place for local residents and the opportunity to become connected to many services including a Region of Waterloo Outreach Worker who can provide bus tickets, food vouchers, and help with child care costs, recreation and holiday supports. We are proud of our long standing partnerships with these vibrant hubs that include an agency therapist and the agency outreach workers, Brenda & Tammy in our Ayr location and Alison Neighbourhood.

Many of our agency therapists get their start supporting one or more community centres. Michele, our art therapist and certified teacher has been busy supporting folks, especially children in Preston Heights, St. Andrews Church in Hespeler, Southwood Resource Centre & the Christopher Champlain Resource Centre. Michele brought her passion for child advocacy and creativity to her work with clients. In her recent absence, Heather, an agency group facilitator and E.A. with the secondary school board will be the new face at Preston Heights. While Lindsay, a social worker with a range of experiences will be supporting our

neighbours in Galt and Hespler. Gillian, co-leader of the Violence Against Women/ Partner Assault Response group brings 15 years of experience in her work with clients at the Cambridge Self-Help Foodbank. In addition to people living downtown, the Foodbank can support anyone in the community. Lastly, Nancy, an agency therapist and group co-leader provides gentle guidance to residents in Ayr every Tuesday and Wednesday.

In addition to therapeutic counselling, FCC has also provided informative workshops to community members and staff. We have presented on stress management and recognizing warning signs of abuse through awareness of the "Neighbours, Friends and Families" education campaign. Derek, one of our clinical supervisors provided a parenting group for teens in collaboration with Fiddlesticks Neighbourhood Association. While FCC has always tried to respond to the needs of our community members, the challenge is having enough resources to ensure this kind of essential collaboration continues. With the help of community members and local businesses there is so much more we could do to empower and transform the lives of our neighbours. You can be assured donating your time, corporate sponsorship for an upcoming event or a charitable donation of any amount will be an important investment in your community.

If you live close to one of the six neighbourhood centres and are looking for help, you can contact the neighbourhood association directly or you can attend an intake meeting at Family Counselling Centre during our weekly walk-in counselling clinic held every Thursday from 1pm to 7pm. You are worth it!

Stress Survival Strategies

1. Do a check-in with yourself daily. Are you nourishing yourself with enough sleep and exercise and the right kinds of foods?
2. Make sure your expectations of yourself and others are realistic. "Perfection is an impossible ideal that sets us up to fail!"
3. Examine your work load- are there areas at work/school, home, relationships, volunteer where you have said yes but really need to say NO?
4. Re-examine how you are spending your time. How much time is being spent on time wasters (computer, TV, people who are takers) vs. things/people that energize and inspire you?
5. Make time throughout the week to refill your tank. "Self-care is NOT selfish. It is self-preserving." Take time to engage in favourite activities and quiet reflection/meditation.
6. Get off the "worry train" by:
 - focusing on what is within your control ;
 - accepting your present reality and learning to embrace uncertainty;
 - planning for the worst case scenario.
7. Do not forget to call on your supports for help with childcare, housework and other tasks. Let them decide when they have had enough.
8. Use affirmations and/or prayer to attract positive energy.
9. Get your feelings out with friends and family and journaling.
10. Remember no matter how hard you try, the work is never done. Focus on a "done list vs. to do".



You are Not Alone - We can help you win the battle against stress!

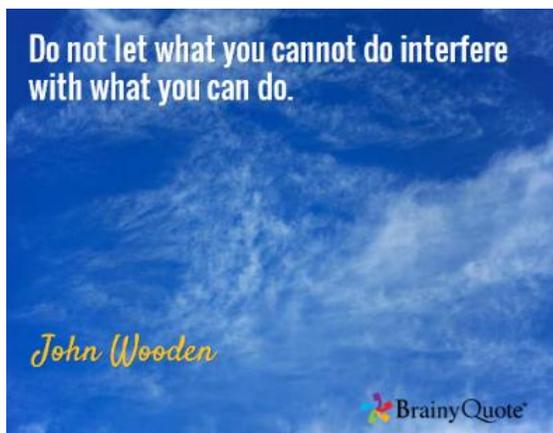
Juke Box Mania is the popular event that is taking off throughout Ontario and we are bringing it to Cambridge. 75 years ago the music was Guy Lombardo's "Winter Wonderland." Our August 21st event from 6:00-9:00 p.m. is a game of "name that tune" from every musical genre in a fun, relaxed, party-like atmosphere. Participants enjoy entertainment (the game), an amazing silent auction and a light dinner at Grand Valley Golf and Country Club. The best part is that funds raised will support FCCCND's important work in Cambridge and North Dumfries.

Please consider being a Corporate Sponsor or donating to the silent auction. Book a table for 8 or purchase individual tickets for \$30. Call 519-621-5090 for more information on sponsorships and tickets. Thank you for helping support FCC's mission to provide essential counselling and outreach to children, adults and families in a safe, caring and respectful environment.

Transform Your Fears to Transform Your Community

Have you ever walked past a person in need or chose not to donate to worthy causes? Why is it that despite having the privilege of a job and a house most people still struggle to give to others? The answer lies in both training from the "Bridges out of Poverty" workshop hosted by FCC a couple of years ago and what we know about the threat-focussed mind. There are important differences in how people in the different socio-economic classes think with regards to time. Specifically, those with very little tend to be present focussed, while the middle class are more pre-occupied with worries about the future. We are a very caring society, but we can be crippled by our fears. Afraid of not having enough, of losing it all, of not being able to afford our children's education or plans for retirement - instead of sharing our resources we save for a "rainy day" or spend money on things that ultimately do not make us happy. This fear of not having enough activates our threat system, leading us to being guarded rather than giving.

But what are we teaching our children? As Aristotle reminds us: "Educating the mind, without educating the heart is no education at all."



Indeed, more and more researchers are discovering that the road to happiness is not paved by financial wealth but rather by kindness. If we can learn to trust that we will be ok and value the education of our modeling as much as institutional learning, not only will it be easier to give but we will be instilling the essential virtues of generosity and gratitude in our children; powerful buffers against stress and depression.

But with so many causes, so many people in need, how does one begin to make a dent? As someone who has worked for a non-profit agency for nearly 15 years, I know how scarce resources can be and how confusing it must be for people to know where to give or to believe their small donation can really make a difference. It is the stories and causes that touch people's hearts that receive the funding. As a counselling agency, confidentiality is one of our biggest assets but it can also make sharing the impact of our work more challenging. If you want to better your community, break the cycle of violence, help ensure your children have positive peer influences, help people sleep better at night, if you think people should be able to get help when they need it and you believe in the power of proactive prevention and ultimately you get that when more members of our community are emotionally healthy, we all benefit then you can trust that making an investment in FCC will be both an act of personal empowerment and community improvement.

Nicole

Editorial Committee:
Michelle Bigger
Bobbie Goldenberg
Nicole Schiener



Ways to Support



Volunteer

We have an upcoming event August 21, 2015 which will require volunteers! Please call 519-621-5090 for more information.

Donate

Give a one time or monthly donation; any amount helps!

